



KARATE









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# KARATE

International Organization Of Good Templars  
Faith Chapter No. 16,

*Prose  
of Lloyd L. W. K. K. K.*



**K A**

**RUTLAND, VERMONT:**



# **R A T E**

the art of "empty hand" fighting

by hidetaka nishiyama & richard c. brown

CHARLES E. TUTTLE COMPANY: TOKYO, JAPAN

Published by  
Charles E. Tuttle Company  
of Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo, Japan  
with editorial offices at  
15 Edogawa-cho, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo

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Library of Congress  
Catalog Card No. 59-10409

First edition, 1960  
Second printing, 1960

Layout of illustrations by M. Kuwata  
Book design and typography by K. Ogimi  
Printed by Inshokan Printing Co., Tokyo  
Manufactured in Japan

# contents

<b>foreword</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PART 1:</b>	
<b>introduction</b>	
<b>1. what is karate?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2. a short history</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3. essential principles</b>	<b>18</b>
physical principles: 19	
psychological principles: 20	
combined physical-psychological principles: 21	
<b>4. organization of karate techniques</b>	<b>22</b>
overall organization: 23	
organization of hand techniques: 23	
organization of foot techniques: 25	
organization of stance: 26	
organization of posture: 27	
<b>5. training methods</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>6. calisthenics</b>	<b>38</b>
exercise sequence: 39	
limbering-up exercises: 40	
muscle-strengthening exercises: 42	
wind and reaction-time exercises: 44	
<b>PART 2:</b>	
<b>basic techniques and their practice</b>	
<b>7. striking points and vital points</b>	<b>46</b>
fore-fist ( <i>seiken</i> ): 47	
other striking points: 48	
vital points and their respective striking points: 52	
<b>8. stance</b>	<b>54</b>
informal-attention stance ( <i>heisoku-dachi</i> ): 55	
open-leg stance ( <i>hachiji-dachi</i> ): 55	
straddle-leg stance ( <i>kiba-dachi</i> ): 56	
forward stance ( <i>zenkutsu-dachi</i> ): 57	
back stance ( <i>kokutsu-dachi</i> ): 57	
diagonal straddle-leg stance ( <i>sōchin-dachi</i> ): 58	
cat stance ( <i>neko-ashi-dachi</i> ): 58	

	hour-glass stance ( <i>sanchin-dachi</i> ) : 59	
	wide hour-glass stance ( <i>hangelsu-dachi</i> ) : 59	
<b>9.</b>	<b>posture</b>	<b>60</b>
	front-facing : 61	
	half front-facing : 61	
	side-facing : 61	
<b>10.</b>	<b>body shifting</b>	<b>62</b>
	stepping : 63	
	double-stepping : 64	
	sliding : 65	
	slide-stepping : 66	
	turning : 67	
	step-turning : 67	
<b>11.</b>	<b>hand techniques</b>	<b>68</b>
	attacking techniques : 69	
	punching techniques : 69	
	fore-fist straight punch ( <i>seiken-choku-zuki</i> ) : 70	
	adaptations of the fore-fist straight punch : 72	
	variations of the straight punch : 76	
	spear-hand straight thrust ( <i>nuķite</i> ) : 77	
	vertical-fist punch ( <i>tate-zuki</i> ) : 78	
	rising punch ( <i>age-zuki</i> ) : 79	
	roundhouse punch ( <i>mawashi-zuki</i> ) : 80	
	close punch ( <i>ura-zuki</i> ) : 81	
	double-fist punch ( <i>morote-zuki</i> ) : 82	
	u-punch ( <i>yama-zuki</i> ) : 83	
	hook punch ( <i>kagi-zuki</i> ) : 84	
	striking techniques : 85	
	back-fist strike ( <i>riken-uchi</i> ) : 86	
	bottom-fist strike ( <i>tettsui-uchi</i> ) : 88	
	back-hand strike ( <i>haishu-uchi</i> ) : 89	
	knife-hand strike ( <i>shutō-uchi</i> ) : 90	
	ridge-hand strike ( <i>haitō-uchi</i> ) : 92	
	palm-heel strike ( <i>teishō-uchi</i> ) : 94	
	elbow strike ( <i>empi-uchi</i> ) : 96	
	blocking techniques : 99	
	rising block ( <i>age-uke</i> ) : 100	
	forearm block ( <i>ude-uke</i> ) : 102	
	knife-hand block ( <i>shutō-uke</i> ) : 104	
	downward block ( <i>gedan-barai</i> ) : 106	
	augmented forearm block ( <i>morote-uke</i> ) : 107	
	x-block ( <i>jūji-uke</i> ) : 108	
	wedge block ( <i>kakawake-uke</i> ) : 112	
	other miscellaneous blocks : 114	
<b>12.</b>	<b>foot techniques</b>	<b>118</b>
	attacking techniques : 119	
	front kick ( <i>mae-geri</i> ) : 120	
	side kick ( <i>yoķo-geri</i> ) : 123	
	back kick ( <i>ushiro-geri</i> ) : 127	
	roundhouse kick ( <i>mawashi-geri</i> ) : 129	
	crescent kick ( <i>miķazuki-geri</i> ) : 131	
	stamping kick ( <i>fumikomi</i> ) : 132	
	flying front kick ( <i>mae-tobi-geri</i> ) : 134	
	flying side kick ( <i>yoķo-tobi-geri</i> ) : 135	
	knee kick ( <i>hillsui-geri</i> ) : 136	



blocking techniques :	137
inside snapping block ( <i>nami-ashi</i> ) :	138
crescent-kick block ( <i>mikazuki-geri-uke</i> ) :	139
<b>13. techniques in combination</b>	<b>140</b>
balance :	142
muscular control :	144
use of body dynamics :	145
switch-over from one technique to the next :	146
shifting body weight :	148
examples of common combination techniques :	149
<b>14. formal exercise</b>	<b>150</b>
advantages of practicing formal exercises :	151
schematic diagram :	151
hints on mastering formal exercises :	151
a representative formal exercise :	152
schematic diagram of heian no. 4 :	153
the form (heian no. 4) :	154
<b>15. sparring</b>	<b>168</b>
basic sparring ( <i>kihon-kumite</i> ) :	169
standard procedure in basic sparring :	170
representative examples :	171
semi-free one-blow sparring ( <i>jiyū-ippō-kumite</i> ) :	181
free-style sparring ( <i>jiyū-kumite</i> ) :	183
tactics :	184
free-style sparring as a sport :	187
<b>16. throwing techniques</b>	<b>190</b>
<b>PART 3:</b>	
<b>karate as self-defense</b>	
<b>17. defense against holding</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>18. defense from floor-sitting position</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>19. defense from chair-sitting position</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>20. defense against knife attack</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>21. defense against attack by club</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>22. defense against pistol threat</b>	<b>230</b>
appendix: karate equipment and its use	235
glossary	247
index	249



## foreword

It became apparent a few years ago that the growing interest which many foreigners, both in Japan and abroad, had begun to show in karate was more than a superficial attraction to the exotic. Since there was virtually nothing available in English, we realized that there was now a real need for a thorough introduction to karate in all its aspects, with specific instruction in learning and practicing individual techniques.

Because of the almost uncanny striking power which a trained karate man can demonstrate, public exhibitions have tended to emphasize dramatic acts of splitting boards and cracking roof tiles with the bare hands, leaving the impression with many that this was the be-all and end-all of karate. Likewise, the ability to perform such seemingly unbelievable feats has made karate subject to exploitation by those who would claim the possession of mystical or supernatural powers.

In addition to dispelling some of these misconceptions, what we have tried to present is a sober and rational introduction to karate in its three main aspects – as a healthful physical art, as an effective form of self-defense, and as an exciting sport. If this book succeeds in teaching the reader the main elements of true karate and encourages him to learn and practice it, we shall feel that our efforts have been amply rewarded.

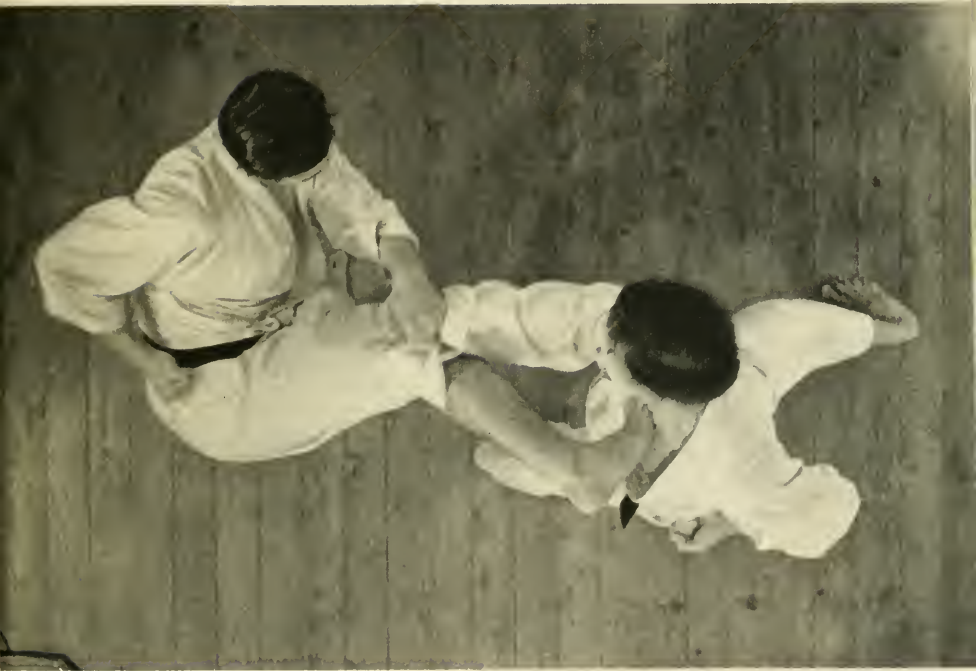
We wish to acknowledge our thanks and indebtedness to Teruyuki Okazaki and Hirokazu Kanazawa, instructors of the Japan Karate Association, who so willingly lent us their time and skill in posing for many of the photographs, and to Seizo Ishiba, of the Gineisha Company, who undertook the arduous task of taking most of the photographs, many of which had to be taken more than once because they involved catching a technique in actual full-speed performance.

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*Member, Japan Karate Association*



PART **1**  
introduction



# 1 what is karate?







The literal meaning of the two Japanese characters which make up the word "karate" is "empty hands." This, of course, refers simply to the fact that karate originated as a system of self-defense which relied on the effective use of the unarmed body of its practitioner. This system consisted of techniques of blocking or thwarting an attack and counterattacking the opponent by punching, striking, or kicking. The modern art of karate was developed out of a more thorough organization and rationalization of these techniques. And the three branches of present-day karate—as a physical art, as a sport, and as self-defense—are all based on the use of these same fundamental techniques.

Karate as a means of self-defense has the oldest history, going back hundreds of years, but it is only in recent years that the techniques which have been handed down were scientifically studied and principles evolved for making the most effective use of the various movements of the body. Training based on these principles and knowledge of the working of the muscles and joints and the vital relation between movement and balance enable the modern student of karate to be prepared, both physically and psychologically, to defend himself successfully against any would-be assailant.

As a physical art, karate is almost without equal. Since it is highly dynamic and makes balanced use of a large number of body muscles, it provides excellent all-around exercise, and develops coordination and agility. Many girls and women in Japan have taken up karate, since in addition to its usefulness as self-defense, it is especially good for the figure. It is widely practiced by both children and older people as a means of keeping in top physical shape, and many schools are promoting it as a physical art among their students.

As a sport, karate has a relatively short history. However, contest rules have been devised, and it is now possible to hold actual matches, as in other competitive sports. Because of the speed and variety of its techniques and the split-second timing

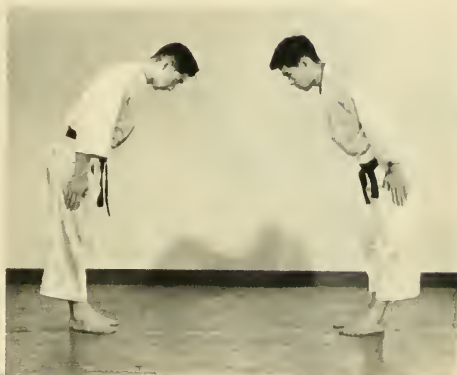


it calls for, many athletic-minded people have come to show an interest in competitive karate, and there is every indication that it will continue to grow in popularity.

Western (i.e., non-Japanese) students of karate may be interested to know that the Japan Karate Association emphasizes its character-building aspects, in which respect for one's opponent, or sportsmanship, is the cardinal principle. The maxims which they teach to their students can be summarized in the following five words:

1. character
2. sincerity
3. effort
4. etiquette
5. self-control

Standing bow performed before  
and after sparring practice



Class bow to instructors before  
and after training session

## 2 a short history

Although the basic forms of individual self-defense are probably as old as the human race, the art of karate as it is practiced today can be traced directly to the Okinawan technique called, in Japanese, *Okinawa-te* (Okinawa hands). This system of self-defense in turn is a descendant of the ancient Chinese art of *ch'uan-fu* or *kempō* (fist way).

There is a famous Chinese legend regarding the origin of kempo: The renowned Indian Buddhist monk Daruma Taishi journeyed overland from India to China to instruct the Liang-dynasty monarch on the tenets of Buddhism. To make that long, dangerous journey alone—along a route that is almost impassable even today—is no mean feat and testifies to Daruma's powers of physical and mental endurance. He remained in China at a monastery called Shaolin-szu and taught Buddhism to the Chinese monks there. Tradition relates how the severe discipline Daruma imposed and the pace he set caused all of



This drawing is a copy of an ancient Chinese painting depicting a karate-like form of unarmed self-defense.

the student-monks to pass out, one by one, from sheer physical exhaustion. At the next assembly he explained to them that, although the aim of Buddhism is the salvation of the soul, the body and soul are inseparable and in their weakened physical state they could never perform the ascetic practices necessary for the attainment of true enlightenment. To remedy the situation he began to teach them a system of physical and mental discipline embodied in the I-chin sutra. As time went on, the monks at Shaolin-szu won the reputation of being the most formidable fighters in China. In later years, the art which they practiced came to be called Shaolin-szu "fist way" and formed the basis for present-day China's national sport.

Okinawa is the main island of the Ryukyu Island chain, which is scattered like steppingstones southwest from southern Kyushu to Taiwan in the East China Sea. From ancient times, Okinawa was in contact with both China and Japan, and probably kempo was imported along with many other elements of Chinese culture. Around 1600 China replaced its civil envoys to Okinawa with military

Funakoshi Gichin: founder of  
present-day karate



men, among whom were many noted for their prowess in Chinese kempo. The Okinawans took a keen interest in it and combined it with a native form of hand-to-hand fighting to produce Okinawa-te.

Little is known about the historical development of karate in Okinawa, but there is an interesting story told about it. About five hundred years ago, the famous King Hashi of the Okinawan Sho dynasty succeeded in uniting the Ryukyu Islands into one kingdom. To ensure rule by law and to discourage any potential military rivals, he seized all weapons in the kingdom and made the possession of weapons a crime against the state. About two hundred years later, Okinawa became part of the domain of the Satsuma clan of Kyushu, and for a second time all weapons were seized and banned. As a direct result of these successive bans against weapons, it is said that the art of empty-handed self-defense called Okinawa-te underwent tremendous development.

The man most responsible for the systemization of karate as we know it today was Funakoshi Gichin. He was born in Shuri, Okinawa, in 1869, and when only a boy of eleven began to study karate under the two top masters of the art at that time. In time he became a karate expert in his own right. He is credited with being the first man to introduce karate to Japan proper, when he gave exhibitions in 1917 and again in 1922 at physical-education expositions sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The art soon caught on in Japan, and Funakoshi traveled throughout the country giving lectures and demonstrations. The main universities invited him to help them set up karate teams, and hundreds of persons studied the art under his guidance.

As the study of karate in Japan became increasingly popular, many other experts from Okinawa and China came to give instruction. At the same time, the ancient native Japanese hand-to-hand fighting techniques of *jujitsu* and *kendo* (sword fighting) were being widely practiced, and modern sports imported from the West were rapidly becoming popular. Karate soon took over many elements from both of these, and the basis was laid for the modern Japanese-style karate described in this book.

In 1948 the Japan Karate Association was organized, with Funakoshi as the chief instructor. Because this organization made it possible for the leading karate men to pool their knowledge and ability, from that time onward progress was rapid, leading to the development of the three aspects of present-day karate, i.e., as self-defense, as a physical art, and as a sport.

In April, 1957, Funakoshi, the father of modern karate, passed away at the advanced age of eighty-eight. But tens of thousands of karate men who learned under him remain, insuring that the art which he taught will not die with him. On the contrary, persons in many foreign countries have shown an interest in learning karate, and it is rapidly moving toward becoming a world art.



### 3 essential principles

The remarkable strength manifested by many individual karate techniques, both offensive and defensive, is not the mysterious, esoteric thing many observers, as well as certain proponents of the art itself, would have you believe. On the contrary, it is the inevitable result of the effective application of certain well-known scientific principles to the movements of the body. Likewise, knowledge of psychological principles, along with constant practice, enable the karate man to find openings and execute the proper techniques at the proper times, no matter how minute the movements of his opponent. At an advanced level, it is even possible for a karate expert to sense the movements of his opponent before they take place.

Before learning the various individual techniques, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the physical, psychological, and combined physical-psychological principles which underlie them all. Of course, it is difficult to interpret complicated physical or psychological processes in terms of a few simple principles. Discussed below are the most important ones.





## ■ physical principles

### maximum strength

Any movement of the body depends on muscular expansion and contraction. There are many factors involved in exerting maximum force through control of these expansions and contractions, and only the most basic are listed here.

a. Force is directly proportionate to the degree of muscular expansion and contraction. This is the principle behind, for example, the coil spring—the more the coil is pressed down, the greater the force it exerts when released. Many parts of the human body operate the same way.

b. The striking power of a force is inversely proportionate to the time required for its application. This means that in karate it is not the muscular strength used to lift a heavy object that is required, but the strength manifested in terms of speed of muscular expansion and contraction. In other words, force is accumulated in the form of speed, and at the end of the movement, speed is converted into striking force. In scientific language, force equals mass times the square of the velocity.

### concentration of strength

To perform any kind of heavy physical work, concentration of strength is necessary. Even a great amount of strength will accomplish little if it is dispersed. By the same token a small amount of strength, properly concentrated, can be quite powerful. It is no exaggeration to say that the practice of most karate techniques is the practice of concentration of strength at the proper time and at the proper place. The following principles are basic:

a. Other things being equal, the shorter the time a striking force is applied, the more effective it is. This element of concentration in terms of time is very important in karate, for it enables one to move immediately into the next technique.

b. The greater the number of muscles brought into play in performing a given movement, the greater the concentration of strength. The force which can be exerted by the hands or feet acting alone is relatively small; therefore, the muscular power of the whole body should be exerted in such a way that this strength is concentrated at the point of impact.

c. Maximum concentration of body strength depends on effective utilization of the resultant of forces produced by exertion of the various muscles. When the muscles are properly coordinated, the resultant force is greater; when they act in opposite directions, it is lessened.

d. Concentration of strength depends not on simultaneous exertion of all the body muscles, but on their exertion in the proper order. The muscles of the abdominal and pelvic region are powerful but slow, whereas those of the extremities are fast but weak. In order to concentrate the force of both sets of muscles, those of the abdomen and hips must be brought into play first, and this force transferred to the point of impact, either in the hands or feet. This accounts for the common saying in karate to move the hips first and the hands and feet last.

### utilizing reaction-force

This refers to the well-known principle of physics that to every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. This

principle finds wide use in karate, for example, in punching out with one hand, the other hand is simultaneously withdrawn to the hip, adding reaction-force to the punching hand. Running or jumping is made possible by pressing downward with the opposite foot. This is an important feature in karate where, for example, in punching, the rear leg is pressed hard against the floor, and the resulting reaction-force is passed through the body and arm to the striking hand, adding force to the punch. In even more complex fashion, when the hand actually strikes the target, the shock of the blow is passed through the body to the legs and floor and then is reversed back to the punching hand, adding further force to the blow.

#### **use of breath control**

It is well-known that exhaling aids in contracting the muscles, while inhaling tends to relax the muscles. This finds direct application in karate, where the breath is sharply exhaled during the execution of techniques and inhaled after their completion.

### **■ psychological principles**

Since karate involves direct contact between two or more human beings, psychological factors play an important role. In many cases the psychologically stronger party wins even when he is out-matched physically. Although this psychological conditioning comes about naturally—until it is almost second nature—in the course of karate training, the examples given below, which embody ancient concepts handed down from the past, offer valuable avenues of approach.

#### ***mizu no kokoro* (a mind like water)**

This term, along with the one in the following section, was emphasized in the teachings of the ancient karate masters. Both refer to the mental attitude required while facing an actual opponent. *Mizu no kokoro* refers to the need to make the mind calm, like the surface of undisturbed water. To carry the symbolism farther, smooth water reflects accurately the image of all objects within its range, and if the mind is kept in this state, apprehension of the opponent's movements, both psychological and physical, will be both immediate and accurate, and one's responses, both defensive and offensive, will be appropriate and adequate. On the other hand, if the surface of the water is disturbed, the images it reflects will be distorted, or by analogy, if the mind is preoccupied with thoughts of attack or defense, it will not apprehend the opponent's intentions, creating an opportunity for the opponent to attack.

#### ***tsuki no kokoro* (a mind like the moon)**

This concept refers to the need to be constantly aware of the totality of the opponent and his movements, just as moonlight shines equally on everything within its range. With the thorough development of this attitude, the consciousness will be immediately aware of any opening in the opponent's defenses. Clouds blocking the light of the moon are likened to nervousness or distractions which interfere with correct apprehension of the opponent's movements and make it impossible to find an opening and to apply the proper techniques.

## **unity of mind and will**

To use a modern analogy, if the mind is compared to the speaker of a telephone, the will is like the electric current. No matter how sensitive the speaker is, if there is no electric current, no communication takes place. Similarly, even if you correctly apprehend the movements of your opponent and are conscious of an opening, if the will to act on this knowledge is lacking, no effective technique will be forthcoming. The mind may find an opening, but the will must be activated in order to execute the technique called for.

## **■ combined physical-psychological principles**

### **focus (*kime*)**

Briefly, "focus" in karate refers to the concentration of all the energy of the body in an instant on a specific target. This involves not only concentration of physical strength but also the type of mental concentration described above. There is no such thing as a focus lasting for any measurable length of time. Since successful karate depends entirely on effective concentration of body strength, focus is extremely important, and without it karate would become nothing more than a form of dancing. This principle will appear frequently in the following pages, so a clear understanding of it at this point is desirable. To further analyze the concept of focus, take the technique of punching as an example. In reverse punching, the fist is thrust straight out from the body and simultaneously the hips are twisted in the direction of the punch so as to transmit the strength of the hips and trunk to the face of the fist, augmenting its speed and power. Of course, speed and power must be carefully balanced, i.e., sacrificing speed by exerting too much power into the arm or body must be avoided. Also, the breath control principle explained above plays an important part in focusing, i.e., the breath should be sharply exhaled at the moment of impact. And, of course, there must be an accompanying mental attitude reflecting this total concentration of the body's strength. As the fist nears the target its speed is increased to its maximum point, and at the moment of impact the muscles of the entire body are tensed. The effect of this is that speed is transformed into power, and the strength of the entire body is concentrated for an instant at the fist. This, in essence, is what "focus" in karate means.

It should not be forgotten that this maximum exertion of energy is instantaneous and in the next instant is withdrawn in preparation for the next movement, i.e., the muscles are relaxed, the breath inhaled, and a position appropriate for the next technique assumed. A karate technique which is not focused is ineffective and so much wasted effort.

### **responding (*hen-ô*)**

This karate concept refers to the correct apprehension of the opponent's movements and the conscious adoption of the proper techniques in accordance with them. Both parts of this process are performed as a single momentary act and appear to an onlooker almost as a reflex action. It is this character of karate that creates self-confidence in its practitioner, i.e., he knows that his mind-directed reflexes don't have to "think" what to do.

## 4 organization of karate techniques

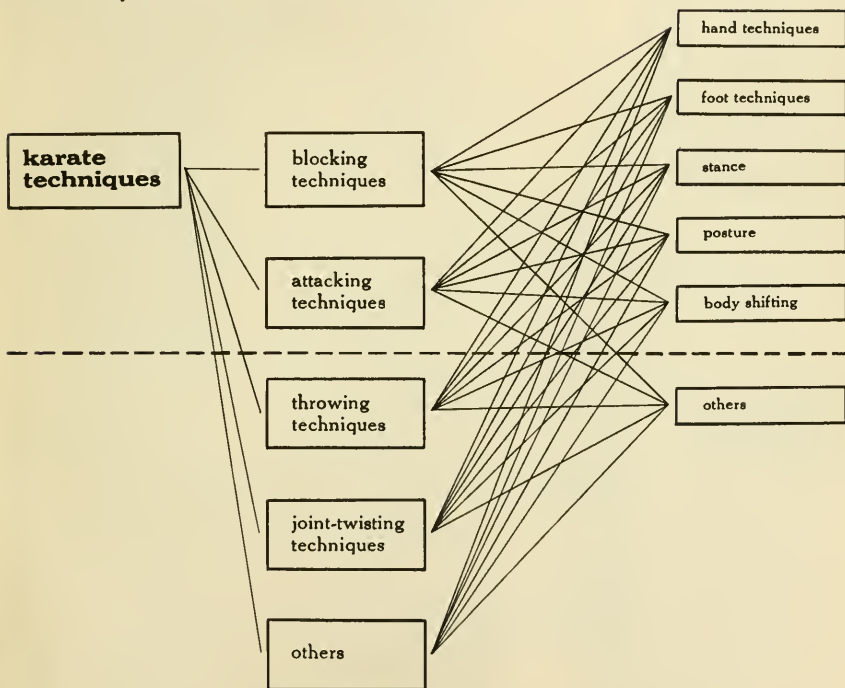


Karate techniques, like the techniques of any other highly developed sport or physical art, have been organized over the years in to a distinct system. Before giving instruction in the individual techniques, it may be worthwhile to outline the essentials of this system.

#### overall organization of karate techniques

As shown in the following chart karate techniques can be broken down into the two major categories of blocking opponent's attack and counterattacking. In addition, throwing and joint-twisting techniques are used in certain circumstances.

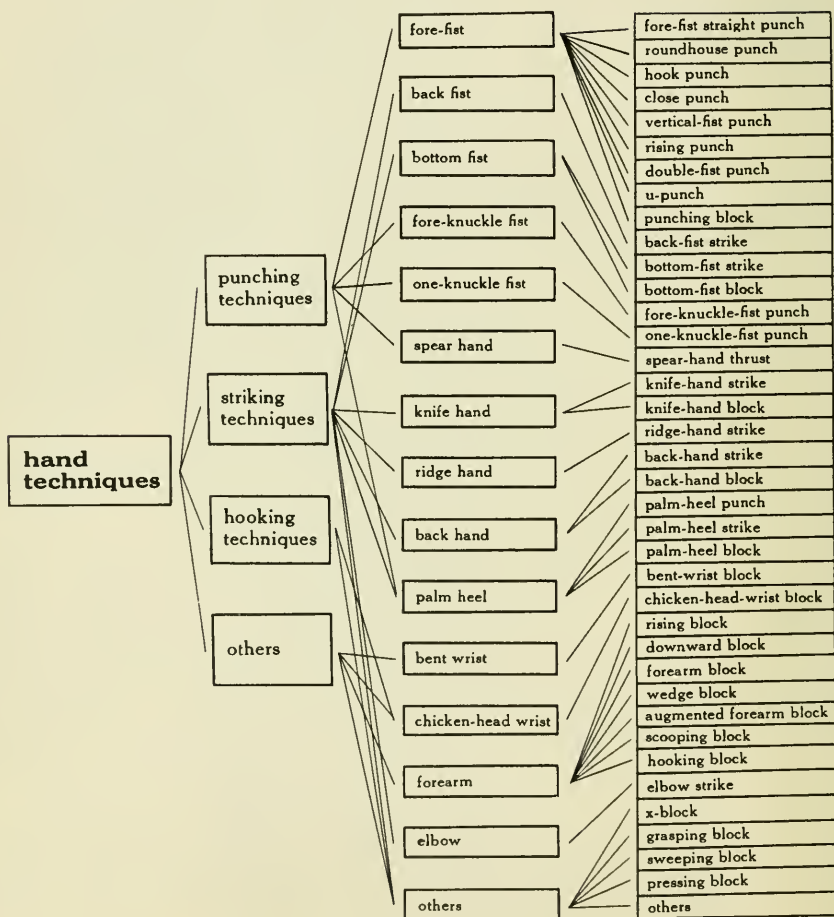
The major categories of blocking, counterattacking, throwing, and joint-twisting techniques are in turn based on the use of hand techniques, foot techniques, stance, posture, and body shifting. Since karate is an art based on the maximum use of all parts of the body, various special techniques are occasionally resorted to, such as using parts of the head or striking with the body.



#### organization of hand techniques

Broadly speaking, hand techniques can be separated into punching (*tsuki-waza*), striking (*uchi-waza*), and hooking (*kake-waza*). As shown on the right-hand side of the following chart, in actual practice, by using particular parts of the hand in various ways, these techniques are broken down into more specific hand techniques.

For example, by punching directly ahead with the front of the fist, the straight punch (*choku-zuki*) is performed. By punching in a semi-circular motion, it becomes the roundhouse punch (*mawashi-zuki*). The same part of the hand used in punching may also be used to perform various kinds of punching blocks (*tsuki-uke*). Similarly, striking with the hand as with a knife is called the knife-hand strike (*shuto-uchi*). Using the same part of the hand for blocking produces the knife-hand block (*shuto-uke*).

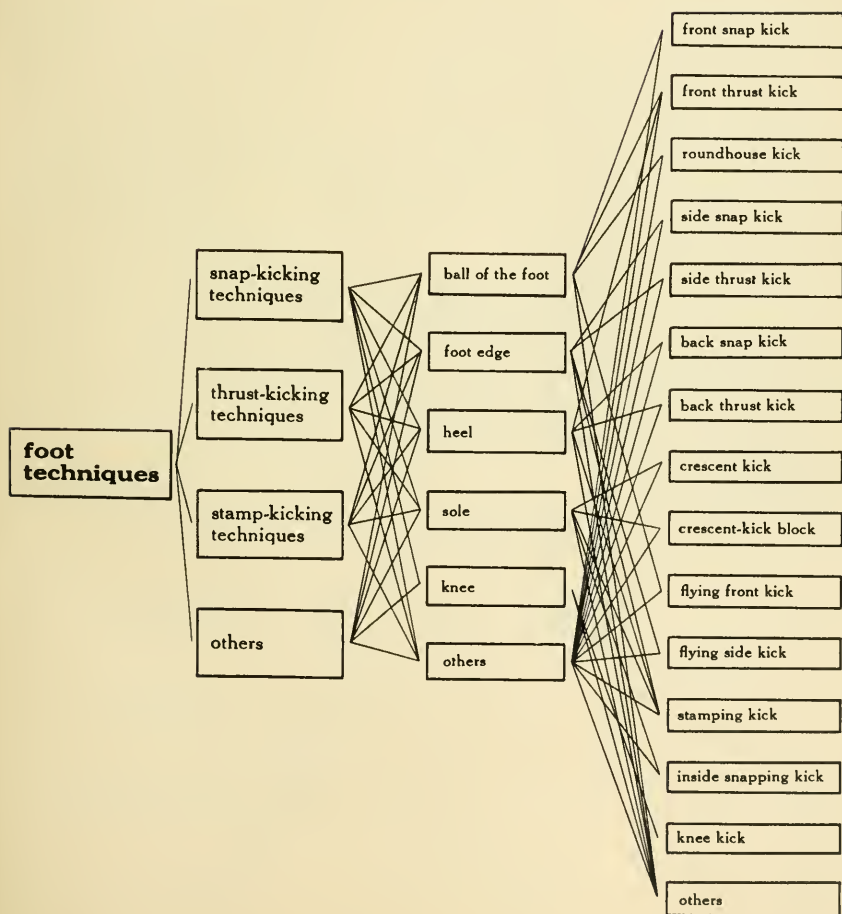




### organization of foot techniques

Foot techniques may be broadly divided into kicking (*keri-waza*), stamping (*fumi-waza*), and miscellaneous. By using specific parts of the foot in various ways, specific foot techniques may be performed.

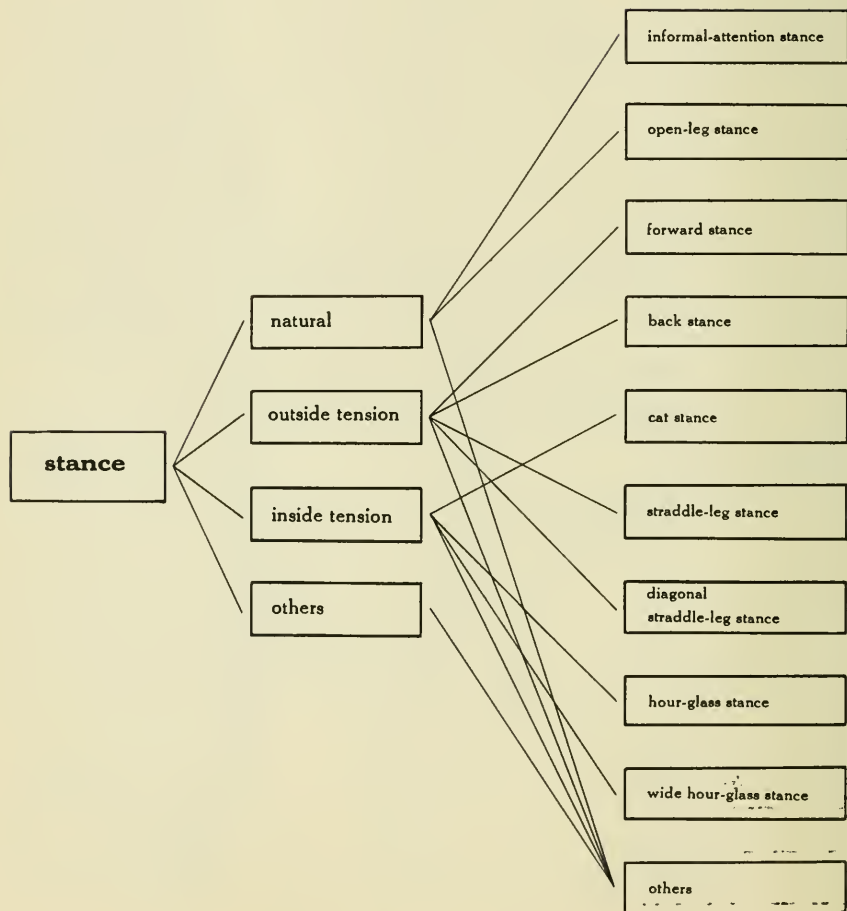
For example, by kicking with the ball of the foot, the front snap kick (*mae-geri-keage*), the front thrust kick (*mae-geri-kekomi*), the roundhouse kick (*mawashi-geri*), and flying front kick (*mae-tobi-geri*) may be performed. Again, striking with the knee becomes the knee kick (*hitsu-geri*), and so on.



## organization of stance

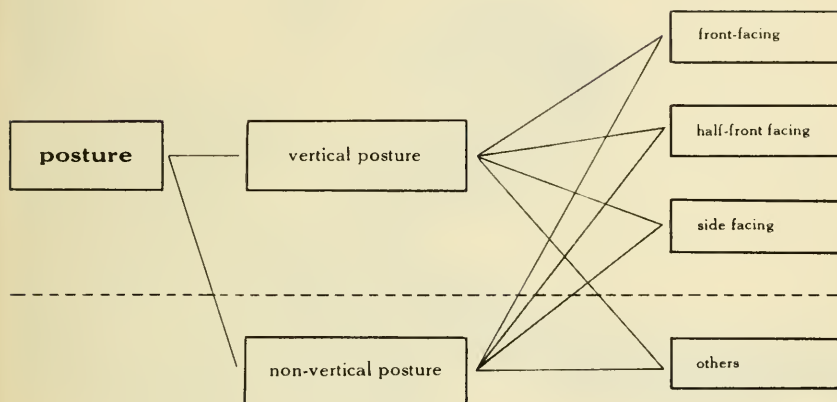
Stances may be broken into natural stances, in which the muscles are relaxed, stances where the legs are put under tension by forcing the knees outward, and those where the legs are put under tension by forcing the knees inward. As these are adapted to specific purposes, they become specific kinds of stances.

The natural stances are preparatory to moving into a specific technique, while those in which the legs are kept under tension help in maintaining balance and add strength to both blocking and counterattacking techniques.



### organization of posture

There are postures in which the upper part of the body is vertical to the ground and those where it is not vertical. Each of these is broken down into postures in which one directly faces the opponent, faces him at an oblique angle, or faces him at right angles.



# 5 training methods



The succeeding chapters present the main techniques of karate in systematic form. However, this order does not indicate the proper sequence of learning or the various types of training schedules. Karate training consists of three main aspects: individual training in basic techniques, applied training with an opponent, and auxiliary exercises to increase skills required to perform the various techniques.

The common factor underlying all karate techniques is the concrete application of the laws of physics, anatomy, and psychology in such a way that maximum power can be attained. It is this constant search for ways to apply the laws of science to movements of the body that distinguishes karate from other sports, and the effectiveness of karate techniques themselves is derived from this scientific orientation.

No doubt the average student beginning to study karate finds the basic practice rather dull and would like to go on immediately to the more exciting practical application. But unless he builds a firm foundation in the basic techniques, his progress will eventually be hampered and his lack of skill in the fundamentals will prove to be a bitter handicap.

Karate techniques can be performed both singly and in combination, and it has been proved that the most effective and well-rounded practice session includes both types. Here is an outline example of a typical practice schedule:

1. basic practice
  - a. punching
  - b. striking
  - c. blocking
  - d. kicking
2. formal exercise
3. sparring
  - a. basic sparring
  - b. semi-free sparring
  - c. free-style sparring

The four most basic components of karate are given under number 1 above. These can be mastered only through constant practice of each one individually.

The formal exercise (2) is composed of all four techniques in combination, plus such body shifting and changes in stance as are required for their smooth performance. These formal exercises give valuable training in mastering the various techniques in combination.

Sparring (3) is a practice method in the form of simulated fighting which gives concrete training in choosing and executing the proper techniques. Especially, it gives training in those techniques which cannot be performed by one person alone, e.g., distancing (see p. 169) and responding.

Basic sparring (3 a) consists of practice with an opponent in which the mode of attack is prearranged. In free-style sparring (3 c) neither the attack nor the defense is prearranged, and contestants are allowed to punch, strike, block, and kick in the manner of their choosing, taking care, of course, to pull their punches and kicks just short of contact. It is the performance of this free-style sparring that constitutes competitive karate, and for practice in the combined use of a large number of techniques, it is unsurpassed. Needless to say, free-style sparring is advanced karate and can be engaged in only after thorough grounding in all the fundamentals. Semi-free sparring

is an important intermediate step between basic and free-style sparring.

The sample training schedule given above is only a basic outline and in actual fact there are many methods of training, which vary according to the aim of the student (as a physical art, for self-defence, or as a sport), his age, strength, level of ability, etc. That is to say, free-style sparring is emphasized by the younger enthusiasts who enjoy and desire skill in competition. Women are more likely to take up karate both for improving their figures and for self-defense. For children and older people, the emphasis is on the virtues of karate as physical exercise. In all cases, however, the level of skill of the practitioners affects the type of training, e.g., beginners must emphasize practice of basic techniques until they have mastered them, whereas experts will devote most of their time to sparring practice.

The following are examples of different types of training schedules:

1. Karate gym for the general public (classes include students, office workers, boys, older men, women, etc., whose aims may include all three aspects of karate; practice is held one hour a day, six days a week).

a. Beginners' training program (four weeks)

1st week

basic practice

- a. stances—natural stances, forward stance
- b. blocking—downward block
- c. punching—straight punch, reverse punch
- d. kicking—front kick

2nd week

basic practice

- a. review of 1st week's material
- b. blocking—forearm block, rising block

3rd week

basic practice

- a. review of first two weeks' material
- b. stance—straddle-leg stance
- c. punching—lunge punch
- d. striking—back-fist strike
- e. kicking—side kick

basic sparring

4th week

basic practice

- a. review of first three weeks' material
- b. stance—back stance

formal exercise

basic sparring

b. Secondary training program (in this case specific kinds of practice are emphasized on certain days of the week).

Monday (emphasis on blocking)

basic practice—20 minutes

sparring

- a. basic—10 minutes
- b. free-style—10 minutes

formal exercises—10 minutes

Tuesday (emphasis on punching)

basic practice—20 minutes

sparring

- a. basic—10 minutes
- b. free-style—10 minutes

formal exercises—30 minutes  
Wednesday (emphasis on stances)  
basic practice—20 minutes  
basic sparring—10 minutes  
formal exercises—30 minutes

Thursday (emphasis on kicking)  
basic practice—20 minutes  
sparring  
a. basic—10 minutes  
b. free-style—10 minutes

Friday (emphasis on sparring)  
basic practice—20 minutes  
sparring  
a. basic—10 minutes  
b. free-style—20 minutes

formal exercises—10 minutes  
Saturday (emphasis on formal exercises)  
basic practice—10 minutes  
basic sparring—10 minutes  
formal exercises—30 minutes

II. University karate team (in comparison with the foregoing gym, the practice here is very rigorous, with special emphasis on free-style sparring, because the competitive aspect is the major aim of the students; beginners must undergo intensive training in the basic techniques).

a. Beginners' course (practice is held two hours a day, six days a week, for sixteen weeks).

1st week

basic practice  
a. stances—natural stance, forward stance  
b. punching—straight punch, reverse punch  
c. kicking—front kick  
d. blocking—downward block

2nd week

basic practice—1½ hours  
a. review of 1st week's material  
b. stances—straddle-leg stance  
c. punching—lunge punch  
d. kicking—side kick  
e. blocking—rising block, forearm block

basic sparring—30 minutes

3rd week

basic practice—1 hour  
a. review  
b. stances—back stance, cat stance  
c. striking techniques—elbow strike, knife-hand strike  
d. kicking—roundhouse kick  
e. blocking—knife-hand block

basic sparring—1 hour

4th week

basic practice—1 hour  
a. review  
b. kicking—back kick  
formal exercises—30 minutes

basic sparring—30 minutes

5th to 16th week

basic practice—40 minutes  
a. fore-fist straight punch  
b. reverse punch  
c. lunge punch  
d. rising block



- e. forearm block
- f. knife-hand block
- g. forward kick
- h. side snap kick
- i. side thrust kick
- j. roundhouse kick

formal exercises—40 minutes

basic sparring—40 minutes

b. Advanced class (practice is held 2½ hours a day, six days a week; emphasis is placed on sparring).

Monday (emphasis on fundamentals)

basic practice—30 minutes

- a. punching
- b. striking
- c. blocking
- d. kicking

combination of punching, striking, blocking, and kicking techniques—20 minutes

body shifting—20 minutes

formal exercises—30 minutes

basic sparring—20 minutes

Tuesday and Friday (emphasis on development of sparring techniques)

basic practice—20 minutes

combining techniques 20 minutes

body shifting—20 minutes

sparring research—30 minutes

basic sparring—10 minutes

semi-free sparring—10 minutes

formal exercises—10 minutes

Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday (emphasis on sparring)

basic practice—10 minutes

combining techniques—20 minutes

semi-free sparring—10 minutes

free-style sparring—40 minutes

body shifting—15 minutes

formal exercises—15 minutes

Experience has shown that, in general, the body can be kept in the best condition by varying the intensity of the training as follows:

Sunday—holiday

Monday—rigorous training

Tuesday—light training

Wednesday—normal training

Thursday—normal training

Friday—light training

Saturday—rigorous training

III. Karate team for people with limited time at their disposal (the training course is eight weeks, two hours a day, three days a week; in order to advance as far as possible within this limited period, the first part is devoted to mastering the basic techniques, the latter part to applied techniques; special emphasis is placed on acquiring skill in self-defense).

1st week

Monday—introduction

Wednesday

open-leg stance

fore-fist straight punch  
forward stance  
front kick  
reverse punch  
Friday  
review  
downward block  
rising block  
2nd week  
Monday  
review  
straddle-leg stance  
lunge punch  
elbow strike  
side thrust kick  
basic sparring  
Wednesday  
review  
back stance  
knife-hand block  
side snap kick  
basic sparring  
Friday  
review  
roundhouse kick  
forearm block  
basic sparring  
3rd week  
Monday  
review  
body shifting  
basic sparring  
Wednesday  
review  
back-fist strike  
spear-hand straight thrust  
knife-hand strike  
basic sparring  
Friday  
review  
hook punch  
flying kicks  
basic sparring  
4th week  
Monday  
review  
formal exercise  
basic sparring  
Wednesday  
review of material learned so far  
Friday  
examination  
critique  
5th week  
Monday  
review  
defense against holding  
basic sparring

- Wednesday
  - review
  - defense against wrestling-style holds
  - defense against holding by two opponents
  - basic sparring
- Friday
  - review of fundamentals
  - review of defense against holding
  - basic sparring
- 6th week
  - Monday
    - review of fundamentals
    - free-style sparring
    - basic sparring
  - Wednesday
    - review of fundamentals
    - defense against boxing-style attacks
    - free-style sparring
    - basic sparring
  - Friday
    - review of fundamentals
    - review of defense against boxing-style attacks
    - free-style sparring
    - basic sparring
- 7th week
  - Monday
    - review of fundamentals
    - defense against knife attack
    - basic sparring
  - Wednesday
    - review of fundamentals
    - defense against attack by club
    - basic sparring
- 8th week
  - Monday
    - review of fundamentals
    - defense against pistol threat
    - free-style sparring
    - basic sparring
  - Wednesday
    - review of all material learned to date
  - Friday
    - examination
    - critique

For the benefit of those who want to learn karate from this book without the aid of an instructor, a recommended training sequence is given below. Of course, the length of the practice sessions and the rigorousness of the training should be varied according to physical condition, age, etc. of the student.

subject of training	remarks
1. introduction to karate	
2. striking points	
3. stance	informal-attention stance, open-leg stance, forward stance
4. posture	
5. body shifting	from forward stance
6. fore-fist straight punch	
7. stance	back stance

8. body shifting
9. front kick
10. downward block
11. rising block
12. forearm block
13. basic sparring

from back stance

using only techniques studied so far, gradually adding new techniques as they are learned

14. back-fist strike
15. bottom-fist strike
16. stance
17. body shifting
18. side kick
19. vertical-fist punch
20. close punch
21. knife-hand strike
22. ridge-hand strike
23. elbow strike
24. knife-hand block
25. roundhouse kick
26. semi-free one-blow sparring

straddle-leg stance  
from straddle-leg stance

using only techniques learned so far, gradually adding new techniques as they are learned  
cat stance, diagonal straddle-leg stance

27. stance
28. palm-heel straight punch
29. roundhouse punch
30. hook punch
31. back-hand strike
32. palm-heel strike
33. punching block
34. back-hand block
35. bottom-fist block
36. back kick
37. stamping kick
38. flying front kick
39. techniques in combination

using only techniques learned so far, gradually adding new techniques as they are learned

40. free-style sparring
41. one-knuckle-fist straight punch
42. fore-knuckle-fist straight punch
43. spear-hand straight thrust
44. double-fist straight punch
45. u-punch
46. augmented forearm block
47. x-block
48. wedge block
49. scooping block
50. crescent kick
51. knee kick
52. inside snapping kick
53. crescent-kick block
54. formal exercise
55. throwing techniques
56. self-defense
57. stance
58. rising punch
59. bent-wrist block
60. chicken-head-wrist block
61. ox-jaw-hand strike
62. hooking block
63. grasping block
64. sweeping block
65. flying side kick

Heian No. 4

hour-glass stance, wide hour-glass stance

### **training gym**

Any level floor which will not injure the bare feet and does not create either too much sliding or too much friction will do. The ideal floor is of polished wood. The room should be well ventilated, with no furniture, and spacious enough to allow freedom of movement.



### **practice uniform**

Any suit of light material that permits freedom of body movement will suffice. It is better if the face, wrists, hands, calves, ankles, and feet are exposed.



## 6 calisthenics

Calisthenics are an essential part of any athletic training, and this is especially true of karate, which requires maximum control over all mobile parts of the body. Karate calisthenics are divided into four types: limbering-up exercises, muscle-strengthening exercises, exercises for improving the wind, and reaction-time exercises.







### ■ exercise sequence

Calisthenics and actual practice are usually conducted in the following sequence: limbering-up exercises, wind and reaction-time exercises, practice of karate techniques, strengthening exercises, limbering-up exercises.

A typical Japanese karate team distributes its exercise time as follows:

- limbering up—5 minutes
- wind and reaction-time exercises—10 minutes
- karate techniques—2½ hours
- strengthening exercises—10 minutes
- limbering up—5 minutes

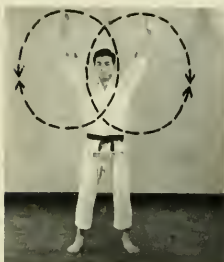
Of course, if the muscles are tired, less time is devoted to strengthening exercises and more to limbering up.



1. Body-loosening: Relax all body muscles, particularly arms and shoulders, and gently lift shoulders up and down.



2. Neck-twisting: Twist head several times from left to right, then backward and forward; then bend neck left and right; finally, swing head in a wide circle.



3. Arm-stretching (1): With shoulders relaxed, extend arms and rotate them in wide circles in front of the body, first in one direction, then in the other.



4. Arm-stretching (2): Same as previous, except that arms are rotated to the sides of the body.

5. Side-stretching: Be sure not to bend the body forward



6. Trunk-twisting: Be sure not to move feet. Twist as far as possible.



8. Back-stretching: Do not bend knees.

## ■ limbering-up exercises

Two basic principles underlying the use of strength in karate are: the shorter the duration of time the muscles are tensed in performing a given technique, the stronger the technique will be; and the greater the number of muscles brought into play at the same time, the stronger the technique will be. Although some



9. Leg-swinging: Swing legs as high as possible to the front and to the left and right. Do not lift heel of supporting leg; in swinging leg sideward twist ankle and instep inward, so that big toe points slightly downward.



10. Leg-stretching: Stretch legs as shown, pushing knee joint down with hand.

muscles are more easily tensed than others, every effort should be made to harmonize their contraction. The aim of limbering up is to tone up the muscles and thereby make them more controllable. You should limber up at the beginning and end of every karate training session.

11. Leg-spreading: Spread legs as widely as possible.



12. Back-stretching: Do not bend knees.



7. Trunk-stretching Be sure not to bend knees. Move body in large circular motion and stretch as far as possible.



13. Leg-relaxing: Gently vibrate legs and feet.



14. Joint-loosening: Relax muscles and shake wrists and ankles.



## ■ muscle-strengthening exercises



**Push-ups:** Straighten arms and legs and raise hips upward, keeping heels flat on floor. Bending arms, lower body close to floor; then repeat first movement. Finally, keeping arms extended, lower bottom half of body. Repeat this sequence twenty or thirty times. This is a good all-around exercise for the arms, chest, abdomen, back, and ankles.



**Pelvis-twisting:** Place hand on hips and twist hips in circular motion, first in one direction as far as possible, and then in the opposite direction. This strengthens the muscles of the hips and legs, especially those used in turning.

**Trunk-twisting:** With legs held down, bend upper part of body backward and forward. Repeat, simultaneously twisting trunk sideways. This strengthens the side and front abdominal muscles.





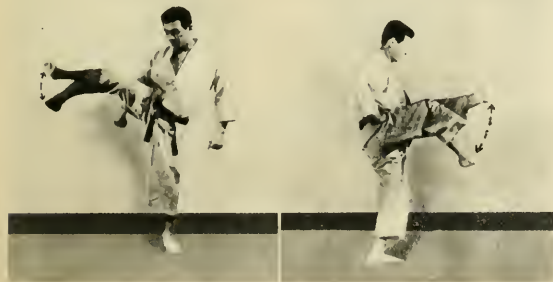
**Rabbit-hopping:** With hands clasped behind back, bend knees, lower hips, and stand on toes. Jump up and forward like a rabbit for a distance of about fifty yards. This exercise strengthens the muscles used in kicking and jumping.

In general, the best exercise for developing and strengthening the muscles used in performing karate techniques is repeated practice of the techniques themselves. However, there are times when additional exercises to strengthen certain muscles or sets of muscles are required. Examples of some of these are given here. Of course, the amount and type of limbering-up and strengthening exercises should be varied according to body condition, limberness, and degree of muscular development. For example, if you are especially weak in kicking, leg limbering-up and strengthening exercises should be emphasized. If the muscles are tired and stiff after practice, strengthening exercises should be omitted in favor of limbering-up exercises.



**Leg-lifting:** Place hands on wall, lean body forward, and rapidly lift knee to chest. Do not lift heel of supporting leg. Repeat twenty-five times with each leg. This strengthens the hip muscles, especially those used in kicking.

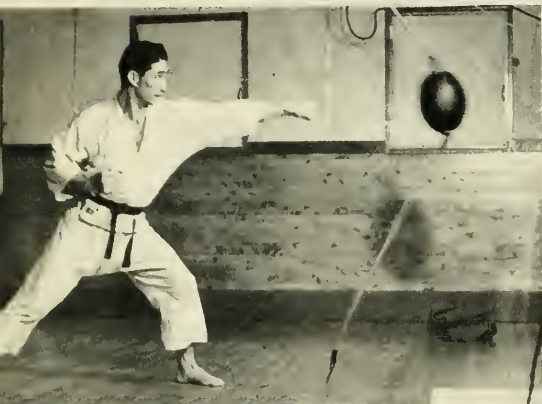
**Leg-snapping:** Lift leg so that thigh is parallel with the ground, then sharply snap lower part of leg sideward. Repeat, snapping leg forward. This strengthens the muscles of the thighs, especially those used in the snap kick.





## ■ wind and reaction-time exercises

There are many exercises for improving the wind and for sharpening reaction-time. Here are a couple of examples.



Ball-punching: Left-hand punching, right-hand punching, and alternately left- and right-hand punching. This gives very good practice in timing.



Rope-skipping: One jump per revolution, two jumps per revolution, and alternately one and then two jumps per revolution. This develops rhythmic movement of the entire body, builds lung capacity, tones up the elasticity of the body, and gives exercise in coordination.

PART **2**

**basic techniques and  
their practice**





## **7** striking points and vital points

The principle behind all techniques in karate is the maximum concentration of the strength of the entire body for purposes of defense and attack. The striking points are the locations of these concentrations of strength. Theoretically, all hard surfaces of the body could be considered striking points, but only those parts and positions where the strength of the body can be concentrated easily are given here. These striking points are the true weapons of the karate man. Unlike other weapons they cannot be bought ready-made but must be forged on the anvil of individual training and discipline.



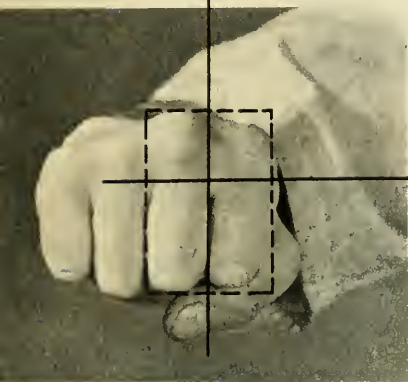


### ■ fore-fist (seiken)

The fore-fist is the most frequently used striking point in karate. It consists of the first and second knuckles of the forefinger and middle finger. Constant practice is necessary to produce and maintain a strong fore-fist.

An imaginary straight line can be drawn from the center of the forearm to the point between the knuckles of the forefinger and middle finger.

The forearm and the knuckles form a straight line. Do not bend wrist. The top and front of the fist form a 90° angle.



The horizontal line represents a continuous straight line drawn through the center of the forearm and wrist. In order to convey the maximum striking force of the body through the arm and wrist to the face of the fist, this line must be straight.

### how to make a proper fist



Starting with the little finger, tightly clench the fingers in succession; finally, press the forefinger and middle finger down firmly with the thumb.

## ■ other striking points



Back fist (*riken*): Used mainly in attacking face and ribs, and also in blocking.



Bottom fist (*tettsui*): Used in attacking head, elbow joints, ribs, and other hard surfaces, and also in blocking.



One-knuckle fist (*ippon ken*): Extend knuckle of forefinger out from regular fist and hold down with thumb. Used in attacking temple, between the eyes, and other minute vulnerable points.

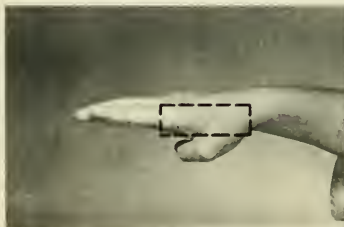


Middle-finger one-knuckle fist (*nakadate-ippon ken*): Same use as one-knuckle fist.

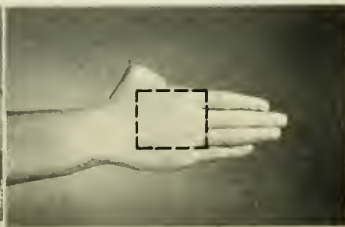


Fore-knuckle fist (*hiraken*): Press finger together with thumb. Used in attacking point between nose and upper lip, temple, and solar plexus.

Ridge hand (*haito*): Used in attacking face, ribs, etc.

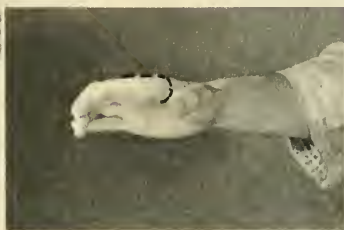


Back hand (*haishu*): Be sure to bend thumb down. Used in blocking and in attacking ribs.





Bear hand (*kumade*): Used mainly in attacking ears, etc.



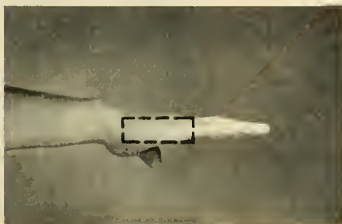
Tiger-mouth hand (*koko*): Used in attacking Adam's apple.

Two-finger spear hand (*nihon-nukite*): Used in attacking eyes.

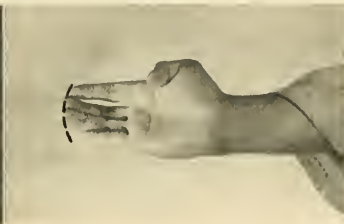


One-finger spear hand (*ippon-nukite*): Used in attacking eyes and solar plexus.

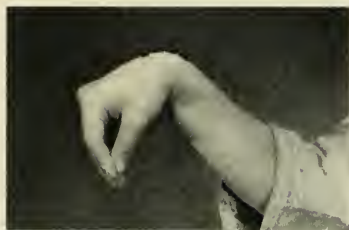
Knife hand (*shuto*): Press inward with thumb and little finger. Used mainly in blocking, but also in attacking temple, neck, ribs, etc.



Spear hand (*yonhon-nukite*): Be sure to make ends of three striking fingers flush. Used in attacking solar plexus, ribs, and chest.



Forearm (*ude*): Used mainly in blocking, especially the part near the wrist. It is used in very strong blocking techniques. The outer, inner, and upper surfaces of the forearm are used.



Bent wrist (*kokuto*): Used mainly in blocking.



Palm heel (*teisho*): Bend wrist upward to form nearly a 90° angle. Used in attacking face, nose, chin, jaw, solar plexus, and also in blocking.



Chicken-head wrist (*keito*): Used mainly in blocking.



Ox-jaw hand (*seiryuto*): Used mainly in blocking and in attacking collar bone.

Elbow (*empi*): Used mainly in attacking chin, chest, solar plexus, and ribs, and also in close-in blocking.



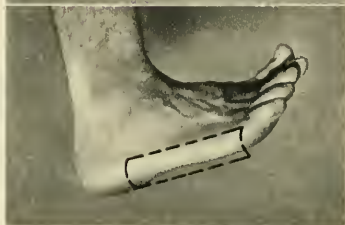


Knee (*hitsu*): Used in close-range attack to face, solar plexus, groin, etc.

Instep (*haisoku*): Used in front and roundhouse kicking to attack groin.



Foot edge (*sokuto*): Used in side kicking and stamping to attack jaw, armpit, solar plexus, knee, etc.



Sole (*teisoku*): Used in blocking and in crescent kicking to attack solar plexus



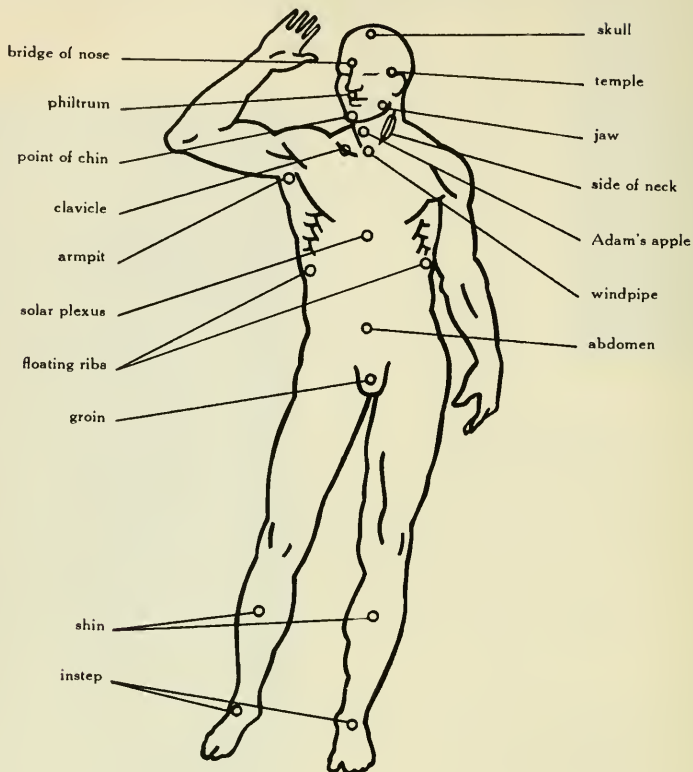
Heel (*kakoto*): Used in back kicking and stamping to attack jaw, solar plexus, groin, instep.



Ball of the foot (*koshi*): Be sure to curl toes upward as far as possible. Used in front and roundhouse kicking to attack face, jaw, solar plexus, groin, ribs, etc.



## ■ vital points and their respective striking points



vital points	striking points most commonly used	
	hand	foot
skull	bottom fist	
bridge of nose	fore-fist, back fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, ridge hand, one-finger spear hand (esp. eyes), two-finger spear hand (esp. eyes)	
temple	fore-fist, back fist, bottom fist, ridge hand, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, palm heel, bear hand (esp. ears)	ball of the foot
philtrum	fore-fist, back fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, ridge hand, palm heel	foot edge, heel, knee (all of face)
jaw	fore-fist, palm heel	ball of the foot, foot edge
chin	fore-fist, palm heel, elbow	ball of the foot, foot edge, heel
Adam's apple	one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, tiger-mouth hand, one-finger spear hand, spear hand	
windpipe	one-knuckle fist, one-finger spear hand	
side of neck	ridge hand, knife hand	foot edge
base of cerebellum	one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist	ball of the foot
clavicle	bottom fist, knife hand, ox-jaw hand	
armpit	fore-knuckle fist, elbow	ball of the foot, foot edge, heel
upper back	fore-fist, back fist, bottom fist, fore-knuckle fist, palm heel, elbow	ball of the foot



base of cerebellum

inner wrist

upper back

small of back

kidney

coccyx

hollow of knee

calf

Achille's heel

solar plexus

floating ribs

small of back

kidney

abdomen

coccyx

groin

inner wrist

hollow of knee

shin

calf

Achille's heel

instep

fore-fist, back fist, bottom fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, spear hand, palm heel, elbow

fore-fist, back fist, bottom fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, palm heel, elbow, back hand

fore-fist, back fist, bottom fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, palm heel, elbow

fore-fist

knife hand, palm heel

fore-fist, back fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, bottom fist

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel, sole, knee

ball of the foot, foot edge, knee, heel

ball of the foot, heel, knee

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel, knee

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel, knee, sole

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel, knee

ball of the foot, foot edge, instep, sole, knee, heel

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel

ball of the foot, foot edge, heel

foot edge, heel

## 8 stance

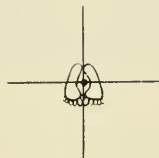
Stance is an important element in any sport, and in karate strong and well-executed techniques of both defense and attack depend to a large extent on a balanced and stable stance. The various stances in karate are based on the two factors of strength and agility.



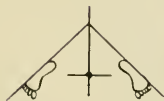
■ informal-attention stance (*heisoku-dachi*)



Stand straight naturally, with shoulders and legs relaxed.



■ open-leg stance (*hachiji-dachi*)



Spread legs about shoulder width apart, toeing out slightly, with legs straight and body relaxed.

These two stances are not a direct part of any karate technique; rather, they are natural postures of everyday use. One of the aims of karate training is to enable the student to move into offensive or defensive maneuvers from these natural positions.

## ■ straddle-leg stance (*kiba-dachi*)



With heels planted firmly on the ground and toes pointing straight ahead, spread legs a distance about twice the width of the shoulders and bend knees outward. Weight is distributed evenly on both legs. Tighten all muscles of the legs and hips.

Keep back straight and push chest out. Knees should be directly over big toes.

In this stance, if the legs are too close together, the center of gravity of the body will be too high and balance unstable. On the other hand, if the legs are too far apart, the muscles cannot be tensed properly, the stance is weakened, and speedy movement is hampered. These observations apply equally to the other stances shown in the following pages.

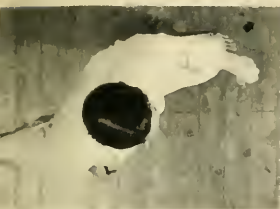
■ direction of tension



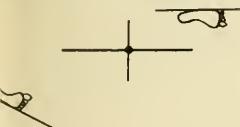
direction of release ■

By holding the feet stationary and bending the knees outward, the legs act somewhat like bows under tension, with the direction of stress pointing inward. This is a strong stance, particularly with respect to sideways movement. This principle of the bow is used in other stances as well.

direction of tension of front knee



direction of tension of rear knee



### ■ forward stance (*zenkutsu-dachi*)

Move one leg forward a distance about twice the width of the shoulders and about 30° to the side. Front leg should be bent at the knee and forced outward, so that knee is directly over outer edge of big toe. Keep back straight and extend rear leg fully. The toes of the front foot should point slightly inward. The front leg should bear 60% of the body weight and the rear leg 40%. Keep both feet flat on ground.

The forward stance is a strong stance to the front; therefore, it is used in attacking forward and in blocking attacks coming from the front.

### ■ back stance (*kōkutsu-dachi*)

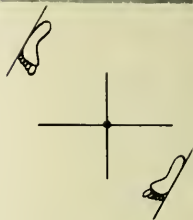
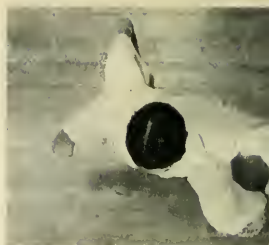
Bend rear knee and force outward the same as in the straddle stance. Move other leg out about twice width of shoulders, so that front leg supports 30% of the body weight and the rear leg 70%. The directions of the feet form a right angle. Do not point toes of rear foot backward.

Because the front leg supports little of the body weight in this stance, it can be put into use easily, especially in kicking. By merely shifting the body weight without actually changing position, it is possible to close in on the opponent. Tensing the rear leg outward facilitates forward movement.



The rear knee should be slightly forward of big toe.





### ■ diagonal straddle-leg stance (*sōchin-dachi*)

This is the straddle-leg stance twisted forward. The front knee is over the big toe, while the rear knee is about one foot forward of big toe. Body weight is evenly distributed on both legs, and both knees are bent and tensed outward. Legs are about twice shoulder width apart, or seen from the front, shoulder width apart.

This is a strong stance both to the sides and front and to the rear, and is effective both in attack and defense. As in the straddle-leg stance, the bowing of the legs is very important.

### ■ cat stance (*neko-ashi-dachi*)

Tense rear knee inward so that it points diagonally forward and is in a position slightly beyond toes. With rear foot flat on floor and bearing most of the body weight, raise heel of front leg and point knee slightly inward. Keep back straight.

Since the front leg bears practically none of the body weight, it is free for kicking. By moving into this stance from a wide-legged one, it is possible to keep a proper distance from the opponent. In order to obtain the maximum forward thrust, it is necessary to bend the rear knee and tense it as much as possible.

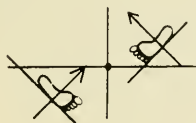


### ■ hour-glass stance (*sanchin-dachi*)

Knees are tensed inward, with front knee directly over toes and rear knee about two inches forward of toes. Toes point inward, and body weight is evenly distributed. Rear toes and front heel are about even with each other, and heels are about shoulder width apart.

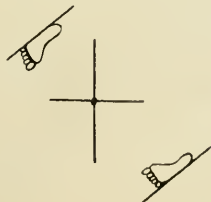
This stance makes use of the tension of the legs bowed inward, the reverse of that in the straddle-leg stance. It provides thrust to the outside, which although not as strong as the opposite, does help mobility and moving into position for the next technique.

directions of tension



### ■ wide hour-glass stance (*hangetsu-dachi*)

The wide hour-glass stance is performed by spreading the legs twice shoulder width.





## 9 posture

Without correct posture, it is impossible to perform karate techniques properly



### ■ front-facing

Used mainly in attacking.  
Shoulders are parallel to target



The basic posture in karate is where the upper part of the body is straight and perpendicular to the ground. In general, if the upper part of the body leans forward or to the side, balance is weakened, and correct techniques cannot be performed. However, there are a few rare exceptions where a non-vertical posture is called for. The three basic postures in karate are: front-facing, half-front-facing, and side-facing

In every case, the upper part of the body is perpendicular to the ground.

### ■ half-front-facing

Used mainly in defense.  
Shoulders face target at a 45° angle.



### ■ side-facing

Used in both attack and defense. Shoulders perpendicular to target



# 10 body shifting

Body shifting in karate consists of stepping, sliding, turning, or combinations of these.



The following points about body shifting should be memorized:

1. Maintain strong balance at all times.
2. Shift the weight of the body smoothly.
3. Maintain correct posture at all times.
4. Don't raise and lower hips more than necessary; they should move more or less in a straight line.
5. Don't raise feet high off the ground; on the other hand, don't drag them either. In either case you will lose both speed and balance.

## ■ stepping

Used with forward stance, diagonal straddle-leg stance, or back stance in shifting where a relatively large change of position is desired.



### stepping in from forward stance

Stepping foot should be raised only slightly off the floor. While moving leg forward, keep it close to the inside to avoid exposing groin to attack. Keep stationary foot solidly on floor.



### stepping back from back stance

As above, keep stationary foot solidly on floor.



## ■ double-stepping

When you want to cover a wide distance and at the same time move the upper part of the body smoothly so as to prevent the opponent from anticipating your moves, double-stepping is called for.



In double-stepping from the forward stance, the rear leg should be brought forward to a position slightly ahead of the body. Perform both steps smoothly, raising the feet only slightly off the floor. The hips should continue to face in the same direction throughout. Do not straighten legs.

In double-stepping from the straddle-leg stance, the first foot is brought up even with and close to the other foot. Both steps must be performed smoothly, with the feet raised only slightly off the floor. The body should continue to face in the same direction throughout. Be sure not to straighten the legs while stepping.



## ■ sliding

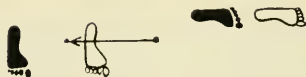
This is used to cover short distances with agility.



To slide forward (e.g., from forward stance), without changing stance and using the forward thrust of the tensed rear leg, shift front leg and body weight forward, allowing the rear leg to follow naturally.



To slide backward (e.g., from back stance), shift entire body backward, taking care not to straighten rear leg.



To slide sideways (e.g., from straddle-leg stance), maintain stance and shift entire body smoothly sideways in one motion.







### ■ slide-stepping

Used in making larger position shifts than is feasible with sliding.

In slide-stepping forward (e.g., from forward stance), slide forward as shown on previous page, and as the slide is completed, take one step forward. The shift from sliding to stepping must be performed smoothly. Be sure to maintain stance throughout.

In slide-stepping backward (e.g., from back stance), slide backward as shown on previous page, and at the end of the slide, take one step backward smoothly. Be sure to keep a strong rear leg throughout.





### ■ turning

To turn 180 from a forward stance, move rear foot sideward about two shoulder widths and pivot around on the balls of the feet. Do not raise heels more than necessary. (When the front and rear leg are in a straight line, as in the back stance, the initial step is not necessary.)



### ■ step-turning

Used when a shift in position, as well as in direction, is desired.

Pivoting on ball of rear foot, swing front foot around so as to resume same stance in the opposite direction.



# 11 hand techniques

Along with foot techniques, hand techniques are the life-blood of karate. They are used in both attack and defense for punching, striking, blocking, deflecting, etc. Here the various hand techniques are broken down into attacking techniques and defending techniques. Attacking techniques are further broken down into punching and striking, and the respective basic techniques of each of these are fully explained in the following pages.



## ■■■ attacking techniques

The purpose of offensive techniques in karate is to render the attack of the opponent ineffective; therefore they are not used against an opponent whose attacks pose no threat. One of the unique features of karate is that attacking techniques can be used directly for blocking as well. This should be kept in mind in studying the following pages. The various forms of attacking by hand are broadly differentiated into punching and striking. The distinction between these will become clear from the examples shown.



## ■■ punching techniques

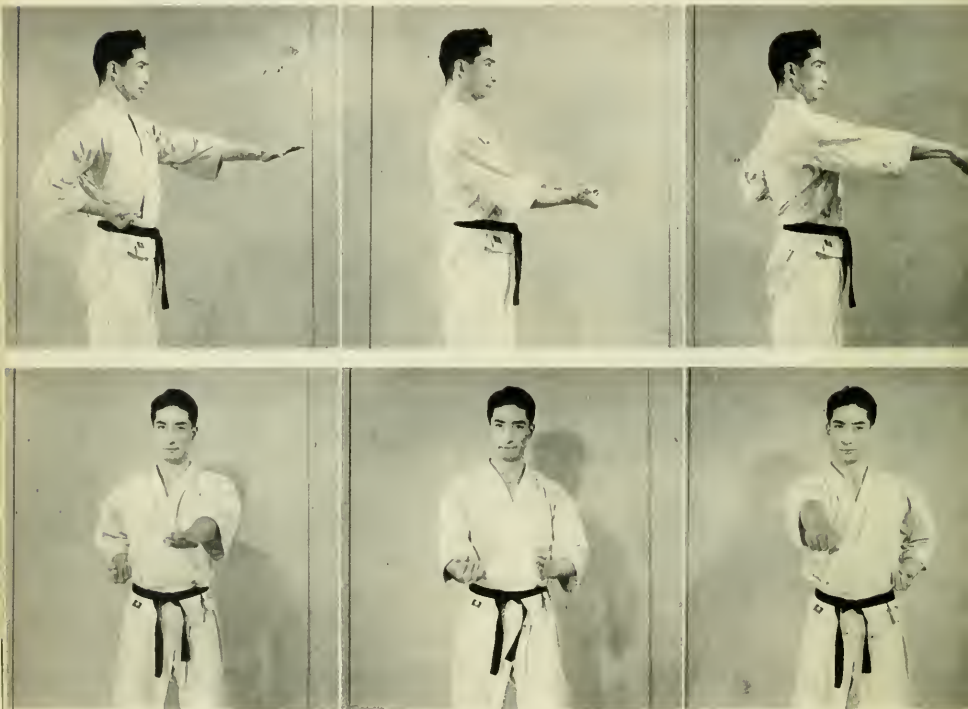
Punching techniques make use of the fore-fist, one-knuckle fist, fore-knuckle fist, palm heel, spear hand, etc. All the representative hand techniques based on the use of these striking points are both fast and effective.

In basic practice the punching hand should start from the ready position just above the hip bone, but for actual use it must be trained to punch smoothly and effectively from any position.

## ■ fore-fist straight punch (*seiken-choku-zuki*)

This is probably the most widely used technique in all of karate and is extremely strong and speedy and effective when the distance to be covered is short. It is a straight outward thrust of the fist, which is twisted 180° simultaneously as it moves from the ready position to the target with the arm fully extended. It is useful for attacking the face, solar plexus, lower abdomen, etc.

Principle: According to karate theory, a vertical line drawn directly in front of the center of the body represents the area at which the greatest strength of the body can be concentrated. Whether aiming at the opponent's face or his stomach, the blow should strike in this area. Without unduly tensing the muscles of the shoulders and arms, the fist and elbow move directly toward target in the shortest distance at the fastest speed. As the attacking arm moves out, the other arm is simultaneously pulled back to a ready position, adding more force to the punch. At the point of greatest extension of the attacking arm, all of the muscles of the body are stiffened, or "focused." This focus is momentary, and in the next instant the muscles are relaxed and preparations made for the next punch.



1. Practice this punch from the open-leg stance.

2. Lower shoulders, relax body.

3. Place punching hand above hip bone, with thumb up and elbow pointing straight behind.

4. Stretch the other hand slightly in front of body.

5. Thrust punching hand straight forward, rubbing the elbow lightly along the side.

6. As elbow passes beyond body, twist arm and wrist so that the arm is straight at its point of maximum extension.

7. Simultaneously twist and retract other arm to ready position with thumb up.

8. At point of impact thumb of punching hand should be downward.

The principle behind twisting the forearm inward just before completing the punch is this: the snap of the arm augments the speed of the punch; it makes tensing the arm and chest muscles easier at the moment of impact; the force of the twisting is added to the force of the thrusting out to increase the overall strength of the punch; and it stabilizes the direction of the punching force. The purpose of retracting the opposite hand simultaneously with punching is based on the principle of physics that to every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. Thus, the greater the force with which the hand is retracted, the stronger the punch of the opposite hand.

At the moment of impact, all of the muscles of the body, but particularly those of the chest and back, must be momentarily tensed



Here is shown how not to punch. The wrist is bent up dissipating the force of the punch and making possible injury to the wrist. The fist is weakly formed, making a strong punch impossible. The shoulder of the punching arm is thrust outward and upward, ruining balance and making it impossible to focus the body muscles at the point of impact.



Practice methods: From the open-leg stance, punch alternately with the right and then with the left hand, aiming at the solar plexus or face of an imaginary opponent. This is called "empty-punching" and, as the most fundamental practice method of karate, should be repeated often. Besides single punching, also practice double and triple punching, in which two or three punches are delivered with the left and right hands alternately in rapid succession.



## ■ adaptations of the fore-fist straight punch

1. **reverse punch (*gyaku-zuki*)**: This consists of punching with the hand which is on the same side as the rear foot. It gains force by making maximum use of the forward twisting motion of the hips. This adaptation of the fore-fist straight punch is so basic and so often used that it is treated as an independent technique in karate. Because it is a forward attacking technique, it is usually used with stances which are strongest to the front, i.e., forward stance or diagonal straddle-leg stance (shown here).

It is simply a fore-fist straight punch performed from a forward stance, with the hips twisted in the direction of the punch. The point at which the hips are twisted to their maximum extent should coincide with the focusing of the body muscles at the point of impact.



The body is in half-front-facing posture

Keep back straight. Twist hips smoothly

The shoulders and trunk face directly forward.

Do not raise heel of rear foot. Tense whole body, particularly the legs, at point of impact

Major points to be kept in mind:

1 Since much of the power of the reverse punch depends on correct timing of the forward twisting motion of the hips, emphasize practice in synchronizing the twisting and punching.

2 Do not lean forward; otherwise, the twisting of the hips is delayed and the punch weakened.

3 Do not allow elbow of punching arm to flap out from body; otherwise, it is impossible to transfer the power of the hip movement to the fist



## Applications of reverse punch

### After blocking a kicking attack



### Catching the opponent off guard



### Practice methods of reverse punch

1 Stand in one spot and repeat the reverse punch, being sure to bring the hand and hips back along exactly the same course that was followed in punching out

2 From the open-leg stance, in one smooth movement step into forward stance and perform reverse punch. Move back into open-leg stance and repeat with opposite hand

**2. lunge punch (oi-zuki):** This consists of a fore-fist straight punch in which the punching hand is on the same side as the leg which moves forward. The force of the body moving forward is used to give strength to the punch. Like the reverse punch, the lunge punch is treated as an independent technique. It is ordinarily used with stances strong to the front, i.e., the forward stance and diagonal straddle-leg stance. It is very effective in closing in on the opponent and delivering a sharp attack.



Start step by bringing rear leg quickly toward front leg.

As stepping foot passes stationary foot, begin fore-fist straight punch. Keep stepping leg bent. Don't move hips up and down.



Stretch stationary leg, thrust hips forward, and as stepping foot is planted down, simultaneously complete punch and focus body. Keep back straight. Don't lift heel.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. leaning body forward; this will upset balance, diminish the strength of the hips, and weaken punch.
2. completing step before or after punch is completed; the punch will not gain the extra strength derived from the force of the forward movement.
3. starting the punch too soon, then holding back to allow the leg to catch up: unless the punch is performed in one movement, it will be weak.
4. lifting stepping foot too high or dragging it along the floor; doing either slows down the stepping and weakens the thrust of the hips.

Practice methods of lunge punch:

1. From open-leg stance, step into lunge punch, return to original position, and repeat with opposite hand.
  2. Step forward in a straight line, lunge punching alternately with one hand and then the other.
  3. Occasionally, throw in a reverse punch with the opposite hand immediately after completing the lunge punch. Another variation is to add a third punch after the reverse punch.
- In all the above cases, the lunge punch should be practiced as an attack both to the face and to the solar plexus of an imaginary opponent.

Applications of lunge punch :



Moving in as opponent advances ...



Breaking the opponent's stance ...



## ■ variations of the straight punch

In these three techniques, the striking points vary, but the basic principle and methods of use are the same as those of the fore-fist straight punch.



one-knuckle-fist straight punch (*ippon-ken-zuki*)

fore-knuckle-fist straight punch  
(*hiraken-zuki*)



palm-heel straight punch (*teisho-zuki*)

■ **spear-hand straight thrust (*nukite*)**

These spear-hand techniques are performed just like the fore-fist straight punch, except that the wrist and forearm are not twisted just before the point of impact.

**vertical spear-hand straight thrust**



**horizontal spear-hand straight thrust**



**two-finger spear-hand straight thrust**



**one-finger spear-hand straight thrust**







### ■ vertical-fist punch (*tate-zuki*)

In principle, this is like the fore-fist straight punch, except that the arm is twisted only a quarter turn and the punch is completed with the fist in a vertical position. Be sure to keep the elbow close in to the body. This is especially useful for a close-in attack.



Reverse-punch form



Lunge-punch form

Application: After closing in and blocking opponent's attack . . .







### ■ rising punch (*age-zuki*)

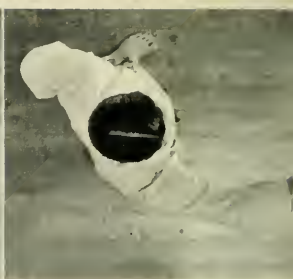
This is a sweeping, rising punch used primarily for attacking opponent's jaw. The striking fist describes a wide arc from the hip to the target. Rotating the fist inward, snap forearm and wrist from the elbow. Simultaneously retract opposite hand to the hip. Be sure to keep elbow close in to the body and do not bend wrist. Focus body muscles at point of impact.

Avoid these mistakes: raising the shoulder of the punching arm or thrusting it forward; these weaken the force of the punch and throw one off balance.

Adaptation: This technique is very much like the fore-fist straight punch and is used in more or less the same way. It may be performed both as a reverse punch and as a lunge punch.

Application: Dodging to the outside of opponent's reverse punch attack...





### ■ roundhouse punch (*mawashi-zuki*)

This is a circular punch aimed at opponent's temple. The fore-fist, fore-knuckle fist, one-knuckle fist, etc. may all be used as the striking point. As soon as the elbow leaves the body, the fist describes an arc, and is simultaneously twisted inward 180°. Be sure to strike target from the side but directly in front of the body. Focus strongly at point of impact.

Avoid this mistake: swinging the body beyond a front-facing position; this interferes with focusing the punch and also puts one in an extremely vulnerable position.

Adaptation: This technique is usually performed as a reverse punch, to take advantage of the twisting movement of the hips, but may also be performed as a lunge punch.



Application: Dodging outside opponent's lunge-punch attack, simultaneously grasping and pulling his sleeve...

### ■ close punch (*ura-zuki*)

This is an effective form of attack in close-in fighting and is delivered with the inside of the wrist up. It is especially important to keep the elbow close to the body. Give the wrist a twist outward just before focusing. Special emphasis should be given to tensing chest muscles while focusing.

Avoid this mistake: allowing the punching fist to swing up so that it strikes target at an angle, rather than straight

Adaptation: This is performed both as a reverse punch and as a lunge punch, and since it is particularly effective when close to the opponent, it is often delivered from the straddle-leg stance.



Application: Shifting to the side and closing in on attacking opponent . . .





### ■ double-fist punch (*morote-zuki*)

This is a fore-fist straight punch in which both hands strike the same target at the same time. It is a powerful attacking technique which is difficult to block. (Shown is the regular double-fist punch; there is also a double-fist close punch.)

Avoid these mistakes:

1. lifting the shoulders up; this will make focusing difficult and weaken the punch.
2. leaning the upper part of the body forward; this also weakens the punch and throws one off balance.

Adaptation: This is usually executed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance. It may be delivered in the lunge-punch form, with a step forward, or in the reverse-punch form, utilizing the twisting movement of the hips.



Application: Stepping inside opponent's attacking arm . . .

Application: A u-punch is delivered while simultaneously blocking opponent's attack to the face.



### ■ u-punch (*yama-zuki*)

This is a simultaneous attack at the face with a fore-fist straight punch and at the solar plexus with a close punch. This is also a very difficult attack to block. It is especially useful against an opponent who has grabbed one's hair. In order for both fists to strike on a vertical line directly in front of the body, it is necessary to lean the body slightly forward and face directly forward. The chest muscles should be strongly tensed in focusing the punch. Do not lift up the shoulder of the arm aiming at the face, and do not push the buttocks out.

Avoid this mistake: leaning the upper part of the body too far forward; this makes focusing difficult and destroys balance.

Adaptation: The u-punch is performed mainly from a forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance.







### ■ hook punch (*kagi-zuki*)

This is an effective technique for attacking from the side from close quarters. It is used with the fore-fist, fore-knuckle fist, one-knuckle fist, etc. to attack the temple, ribs, etc. As soon as the elbow passes the hip, the fist is twisted and thrust directly sideward in a sharp curve. Do not flap the elbow outward from the body. The point of impact should be directly in front of the opposite side of the body.

Adaptation: The hook punch is usually delivered from a forward, straddle-leg, or diagonal straddle-leg stance.

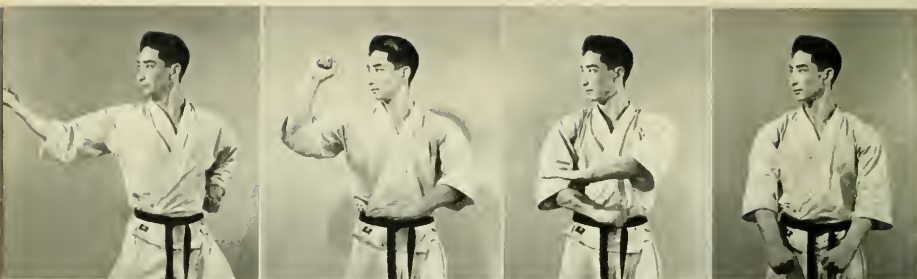


Application: Moving close outside opponent's punching attack . .









### ■ back-fist strike (*riken-uchi*)

This is a technique which utilizes the snapping motion of the elbow to strike with the back of the fist. It is used mainly in close-in fighting as an attack to the face or solar plexus of the opponent. It can be performed either in a downward movement or a sideward movement.

### downward strike

Holding the elbow stationary, snap fist downward. Twist fist outward as strike is completed. Be careful not to move elbow backward beyond side of body. Retract hand along same line described in striking out.



### Adaptations:

From the straddle-leg stance, attack to the side.

From the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance, attack to the front.



### Application:

Blocking a punching attack to the body . . .



### sideward strike

Aim elbow at target and, twisting wrist, snap fist sideward. The hand should move toward target in a horizontally straight line.

Adaptation: The sideward back-fist strike is usually used to attack to the side and is performed from the straddle-leg stance. It may also be performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance.



Application: Dodging and ducking a punching attack to the face ...





downward strike

#### ■ bottom-fist strike (*tettsui-uchi*)

This technique is performed in the same manner as the back-fist strike, except that the striking surface is the bottom fist. It may be performed downward or sideward to attack head, joints, and other hard surfaces, as well as face and solar plexus. A special advantage of this technique is that it presents little danger of injury to the attacking hand.



sideward strike



### ■ back-hand strike (*haishu-uchi*)

This technique is performed in the same manner as the back-fist strike, except that the fist is not clenched. It is used to attack the ears, solar plexus, etc. It can also be used as a blocking technique. It is especially important to snap the wrist outward at the completion of the strike.

It is usually performed from the straddle-leg stance to attack to the side.







## ■ knife-hand strike (*shutō-uchi*)

This is a striking technique in which the snapping force of the elbow and the twisting of the wrist are used in attacking opponent's neck, etc. with the edge of the hand.



### outside strike

Pass hand smoothly to a point near the ear, with elbow bent and pointing sideways. Swing hand in a wide arc to target. At point of impact, elbow should be in front of body.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. not twisting arm sufficiently so that palm is not upward at moment of impact; this weakens the force of the blow.
2. raising the shoulder of the striking arm so that chest muscles cannot be tensed; this also weakens the force of the blow.
3. not squeezing tightly together the fingers of the striking hand; this weakens the force of the blow and causes possible injury to the fingers.

Adaptation: The knife-hand strike may be performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance, either in the form of a lunge punch or a reverse punch. The latter is especially effective, since the force of the twisting of the hips is added to the strike.

Application : While blocking a punching attack . . .







### inside strike

Raise striking hand smoothly to a point near opposite ear and swing forward in a wide arc to the target. Just before the point of impact twist the arm so that the palm is downward, focusing at a point directly in front of the body.

Adaptation: This is performed in the same manner as the outside knife-hand strike. In this case, however, the force of the blow does not vary between the lunge-punch form and the reverse-punch form.



Application (right to left): Thrust-kicking the leg of the attacking opponent and breaking his balance . . .





### ■ ridge-hand strike (*haitō-uchi*)

This technique, also, may be performed in two ways: from the inside and from the outside. It is used in attacking the ribs, temples, etc. and also in blocking. (See p. 48 for striking point used.)

#### outside strike

Swing hand in a wide outside arc and snap hand inward just before striking target, so that palm is downward and directly in front of body.

Avoid these mistakes: raising the shoulder of the striking arm or thrusting it forward; these make it impossible to tense chest muscles and weaken the force of the blow.

Adaptation: This technique is usually performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance in either lunge-punch or reverse-punch form.

Application: Simultaneously dodging to the outside and blocking an attack to the solar plexus...





### inside strike

Swing arm in an inside arc, snapping hand upward just before point of impact. Strike target with palm upward directly in front of hips.

Avoid these mistakes: lifting the shoulder of striking arm and not twisting the hand far enough, so that target is struck at an angle.

Adaptation: This also may be performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance, and in the lunge-punch or reverse-punch form.





### ■ palm-heel strike (*teishō-uchi*)

This may be performed in two ways: upward or from the side. It is used for attacking the face, chin, ribs, solar plexus, etc. and also for blocking.

#### upward strike

From a point near the abdomen thrust hand in a straight line upward and outward from body, simultaneously twisting the hand outward. Keep elbow close in to body. At the moment of impact, the heel of the palm points directly upward.

Avoid these mistakes: lifting shoulder of striking arm and not bending wrist enough.

Adaptation: This is performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance in either the lunge-punch or reverse-punch form.



Application: Simultaneously blocking an attack to the solar plexus...





### **sideward strike**

Swing hand in a wide arc to the rear of the body and then to the side, simultaneously twisting hand outward. Utilizing the snapping motion of the wrist, focus blow so that thumb is upward when palm heel strikes target. Be sure to bend wrist sharply.

Avoid these mistakes: thrusting hand directly sideways instead of in an arc; in this case the palm heel will strike target at an angle and be ineffective.

Adaptation: This is usually performed from the straddle-leg stance to attack to the side, but it may also be used in attacking to the front from a forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance.



Application: Dodging outside an attack to the face . . .





## ■ elbow strike (*empi-uchi*)

This is a very powerful technique used mainly in close-in fighting. It can be broken down into four separate techniques: forward strike, upward strike, sideward strike, and backward strike. It is used mainly to attack the chin, solar plexus, or ribs of the opponent.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. lifting the shoulder of the striking arm; this makes it difficult to tense the chest muscles in focusing the strike.
2. swinging the elbow outward and moving it in an arc toward the target; this dissipates the strength of the strike and causes it to glance off the target.

## forward strike

Point elbow at target and strike outward in a straight line, twisting wrist inward and bending elbow deeply.

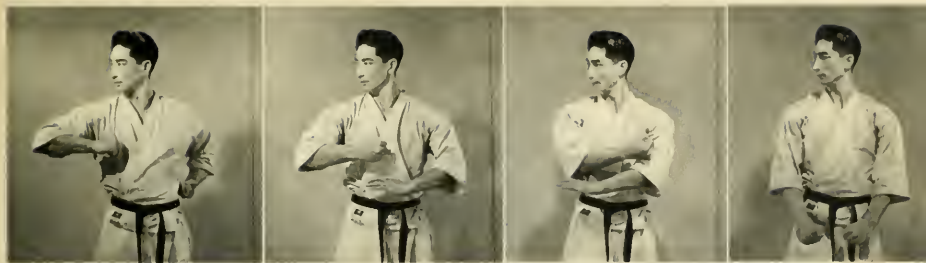


## upward strike

Keeping arm close in to body, swing elbow upward, twisting hand inward and bending elbow deeply so that at point of impact hand is close to ear.







### **sideward strike**

Turning wrist inward and bending elbow deeply, strike directly sideward in a straight line.



### **backward strike**

Twist hand outward and thrust elbow straight backward. This strongly resembles the movement of the retracting hand in the forward punch. By roundhouse punching to the rear with the opposite hand, the technique is made stronger and more effective.

Adaptation: These techniques may all be performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance in the lunge punch or reverse punch form. As especially effective techniques in close-in fighting, they may be performed from the straddle-leg stance.





Forward strike ➡



Sideward strike ▮



▮ Upward strike



➡ Backward strike



## ■■■ blocking techniques

The true art of karate is said to "begin and end with blocking." Another motto is: "In karate never make the first move." The meaning behind both of these expressions is that karate ethics opposes its use for offensive purposes.

Since karate originated and has developed as an art of self-defense, blocking techniques are highly developed. Most of these are performed with the hands, in which the opponent's attacking hand or foot is struck, deflected, pressed down, hooked, or in some other way blocked, so that the attack is rendered ineffective. A distinctive feature of many karate blocking techniques is that they are "focused" blocks, in which the whole strength of the body is concentrated at the blocking point and then withdrawn. The advantage of this is that they often inflict such pain on the opponent's attacking arm or leg that he is discouraged from attacking again. Also, this kind of block enables one to maintain his posture and balance and be immediately ready to perform the next technique, be it a counterattack or another block.



In karate the blocking technique to be used in any given situation must be determined on the basis of the form of attack, the strength of the opponent, one's own position in relation to that of the opponent, one's own strength, and other pertinent factors. The following points, particularly, should be borne in mind:

1. Make every effort to turn the opponent's strength to your own advantage.
2. Be sure to maintain your own balance and posture in blocking.
3. The blocking hand should not be over-engaged in the block, but should be preparing for the next technique.
4. While blocking and afterward be sure your posture or position does not offer your opponent an opening.
5. While blocking you should have in mind the counterattack you will follow up with.



### ■ rising block (*age-uke*)

This is a widely used focused block consisting of raising the arm and striking the attacker's arm with the outer surface of the forearm near the wrist. It is usually used to block an attack to the face.

With the elbow bent about 90°, swing arm upward, keeping it close in to the body. As arm passes in front of body, twist inward, then snap upward and focus at a point about three inches out from top of forehead. At this point the thumb should be downward. The point of contact should be directly in front of the vertical center of the body. Simultaneous with the up-swing of the blocking arm, cross opposite hand in front of mouth and withdraw it strongly to the ready position.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. lifting the shoulder of the blocking arm; this makes it difficult to tense the muscles of the chest and weakens the block.
2. raising the elbow to a point higher than the blocking hand; this will weaken the technique to the extent that it will be ineffective in blocking the attack.
3. swinging the elbow beyond the side of the body; this makes it difficult to concentrate the strength of the body at the point of impact.
4. completing the block at a point too far away from the body; this provides the opponent with an opportunity to attack again with the same arm.



Adaptation: Since this technique is used mainly to block attacks coming from the front, it is performed from those stances which are strong to the front, i.e., the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance. The upper part of the body should be in the half-front-facing posture. The photographs to the right illustrate the use of the rising block while stepping back into a forward stance from a natural stance.



Application: As opponent attacks with a reverse punch to the face...



An example of the additional use of the withdrawing hand: Ordinarily, the withdrawing hand is used to add force to the technique of the opposite hand. However, it can be used in other ways, for example, to pull the opponent into the punch of the other hand. Shown below is its use with the rising block: grasp the wrist of the opponent's attacking arm with the withdrawing hand and, while pulling it down, block upward with the other arm at the opponent's elbow joint, breaking his arm.



### ■ forearm block (*ude-uke*)

This is a strong defensive focused technique used to block an attack to the solar plexus and occasionally to the face. There are two kinds of forearm blocks: from the outside, in which case the striking point is the outer surface of the forearm near the wrist; and from the inside, with the inner surface of the forearm near the wrist as the striking point.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. blocking with the elbow in a position not in front of the body; this prevents tensing the muscles of the chest, making the block ineffective.
2. unbending the arm too much; this leaves the body open for further attack; the elbow should be bent at an angle between 80° and 90°.
3. not twisting hand of blocking arm far enough; this results in not striking with the proper blocking surface, weakening the block.



#### **outside block**

With elbow bent, swing forearm from a point near the ear to the front of the body. Snap fist outward and focus strongly at point of impact. At the completion of the block, the elbow should be in front of the body and not to the side.

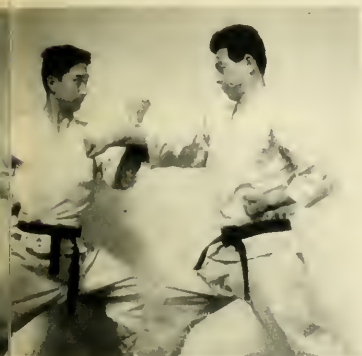
#### **inside block**

With arm bent and fist near opposite armpit, swing forearm to the front of the body, twisting hand outward and using elbow as if it were a fulcrum. Focus strongly at point of impact. Be sure that elbow does not move beyond front of body.





Adaptation: These blocking techniques are usually performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance and in the lunge-punch or reverse-punch form. They are also occasionally performed from the straddle-leg stance.



#### Applications:

An outside block of a punching attack to the solar plexus.



An inside block of a punching attack to the face.



Moving into an attack: There are many ways of counter-attacking after executing the forearm block. Below is an example of counterattacking with an elbow strike immediately following an outside forearm block.





### ■ knife-hand block (*shutō-uke*)

This speedy block is a technique unique to karate. It is used in a wide range of situations, mainly to defend against an attack to the solar plexus. However, beginners often experience difficulty in performing it properly. The special advantage of this block is that it puts one in a "ready" position for immediate counterattacking or for further defense.

Start with blocking hand beside opposite ear, and with elbow as fulcrum, slash forearm down diagonally, simultaneously twisting hand inward. At the same time, quickly pull withdrawing hand, unclenched, to a position in front of the middle of the chest, with the palm upward. Take special care to attain the correct angle with the blocking arm and the correct position of the elbow at the point of focusing the block.

Application: Stepping back from a punching attack



Adaptation: Since this technique is for the most part made use of while shifting to the rear, it is most conveniently performed from the back stance. Shown on the right is the knife-hand block being performed while stepping back from an open-leg stance into a back stance. Note that the upper part of the body assumes a half-front-facing posture.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. lifting the shoulder of the blocking arm; this makes it difficult to tense the chest muscles in focusing the block.
2. straightening the arm too much or moving elbow outward away from body; these will render the block ineffective.
3. bending the wrist or moving the arm in an arc rather than a straight line; these will also weaken the block.





Application:  
Confronted with a  
kicking attack . . .

(Note that the right  
hand of the man who  
has blocked is moving  
in for the counterattack.)



### ■ downward block (*gedan-barai*)

This is a technique which uses the outer surface of the forearm near the wrist to deflect and block an attack to the solar plexus, the abdomen, or the groin. It is especially effective in defending against kicking attacks. After completing the block, one is in a standard "ready" position.

Swing fist of blocking hand from a point near the opposite ear diagonally downward in a strong deflecting motion, simultaneously twisting arm so that wrist is downward. At point of impact, arm is fully extended. Be sure not to swing arm beyond the front of the body.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. lifting shoulder of blocking arm; this makes it impossible to tense muscles of chest.
2. failing to focus block at point of contact; this makes it ineffective as a block and destroys balance.
3. failing to clench the fist of the blocking hand strongly enough; this makes it easy to injure the wrist.

Adaptation: Since this is a strong block against an attack from the front, it is usually performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance. Occasionally, it is used to defend against an attack from the side, in which case it is performed from the straddle-leg stance.





### ■ augmented forearm block (*morote-uke*)

This technique is used in much the same way as the inside forearm block, but it is somewhat stronger, and after blocking one is in a "ready" position and can immediately move in to the counterattack or defend against a further attack.

This technique is performed in the same manner as the inside forearm block, except that the strength of the block is increased by swinging the opposite arm sharply in front of the body, instead of withdrawing it to the side. Bring fist of augmenting arm close to elbow of blocking arm, twist outward, and focus strongly at point of impact. This position makes it possible to tense the chest muscles and the muscles of both arms in focusing the block, giving it much extra strength.

Moving into an attack: A punching attack is blocked with an augmented forearm block; then the blocking hands are quickly exchanged and a reverse-punch counterattack delivered with the original blocking hand.







### ■ x-block (*jūji-uke*)

This is an effective blocking technique which requires comparatively little strength and which can be easily turned to one's advantage in counterattacking. There are two types of x-blocks: blocking upward to defend against an attack to the face; and blocking downward to defend against a kicking attack to the abdomen or groin.

#### upward block

Thrust both hands in a straight line upward so that they cross at a point even with the top of the head and about one foot away. The purpose of leaving the hands open is to facilitate grasping or twisting the opponent's wrist in counterattacking. Right-handed persons should ordinarily place the left hand in front of the right.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. thrusting the elbows outward beyond the sides of the body; this weakens the block so that it will give way under the impact of a strong attack.
2. moving the hands in an outside arc in front of the body instead of in a straight line; this weakens the block, since they will not make contact with the attacking arm at a right angle; if anything, move hands in an inside arc from the chest outward.







Adaptation: Since this technique is most effective in blocking an attack from the front, it is usually performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance, but since comparatively little strength is required, it can also be performed from a kneeling or sitting position

#### Applications:

Moving into an attack from upward block.



Grasping and pulling opponent's arm while delivering front kick.



Twisting opponent's arm against the joint and attacking to the face.





### **downward block**

Cross fists near one side of the body and thrust them strongly downward so that they strike at a point in front of the abdomen about one foot away. Right-handed persons usually perform this technique from the right side, with the right hand over the left. Unlike the upward block, in this case the fists are tightly clenched to avoid injury to the fingers in blocking a strong kick.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. leaving the elbow bent or projecting beyond the side of the body; this weakens the block so that it cannot withstand the shock of a strong attack.
2. merely pressing down with the crossed fists without focusing; this also weakens the block and makes it impossible to prepare for the next technique.
3. leaning the upper part of the body forward; this destroys one's balance.





Adaptation This technique is usually performed from stances strong to the front, i.e., the forward and diagonal straddle leg stances



Timing of downward block: To insure that the block will be effective, every effort should be made to block a kicking attack in its initial stages. Therefore, special attention should be paid to timing





### ■ wedge block (*kakiwake-uke*)

This is a double-handed block in which the outer surfaces of the wrists are used to block a double-fist punch or to defend against an opponent who attempts to grasp one's lapels.

Place both fists in front of face, with knuckles outward and elbows pointing downward. With elbows as fulcrum, snap wrists down and outward to complete the block, focusing at point of contact.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. thrusting elbows beyond sides of body; this weakens the block and makes it ineffectual.
2. straightening the arms too much; this also weakens the technique.

Adaptation: This technique is usually performed from the forward or diagonal straddle-leg stance, but in order to be able to make an immediate kicking counterattack, it is often performed from the back stance as well.





**Application:**

Upon being grasped by the lapels, step back into back stance and counterattack with a front kick.



## ■ other miscellaneous blocks

The most basic techniques have been described in the foregoing pages. In addition, there are many others, the most common of which are described below and in the next three pages.



### **punching block (*tsuki-uke*)**

This is actually a punching attack and a block performed in one movement. With arm slightly curved to ward off opponent's attack with outside surface of arm, a fore-fist straight punch is delivered to the face.

### **palm-heel block (*teisho-uke*)**

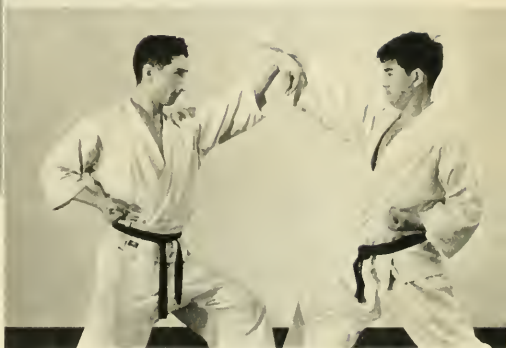
This is a speedy technique using the palm-heel strike (p. 94) as a block against an attack to the face or solar plexus. It may be performed in three ways: by striking downward, upward, or from the side.





**chicken-head-wrist block (*keito-uke*)**

This is an upward block making full use of the snapping motion of the wrist. It is a speedy technique involving a minimum of motion. After blocking, by using the reverse snap and the ox-jaw hand (p. 50) as the striking surface, block downward or counterattack to the opponent's collarbone.

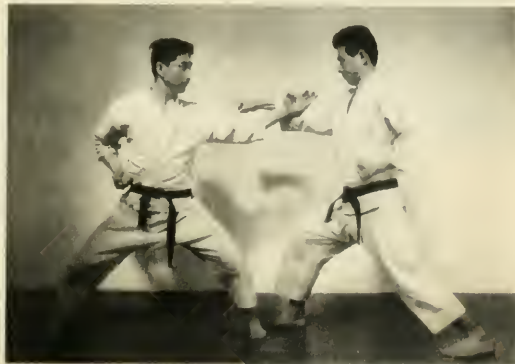


**bent-wrist block (*kakuto-uke*)**

This technique uses a wrist snap similar to that of the chicken-head block. For an immediate counterattack, you can use the opposite snapping of the wrist to deliver a palm-heel strike.

**back-hand block (*haishu-uke*)**

This is simply the back-hand strike used as a block, mainly against an attack to the solar plexus. The chief advantage of this technique is that, after blocking, it is easy to grasp the opponent's arm and pull him off balance.





**bottom-fist block (*tettsui-uke*)**

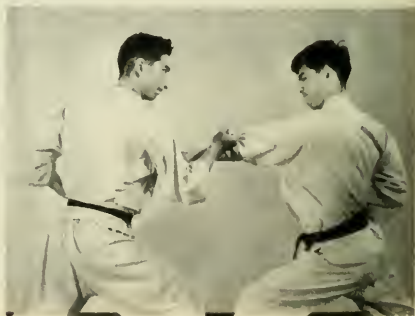
This is the bottom-fist strike (p. 88) used as a block. It is particularly effective as a strong block against the elbow or other hard surfaces of opponent's attacking arm or leg.

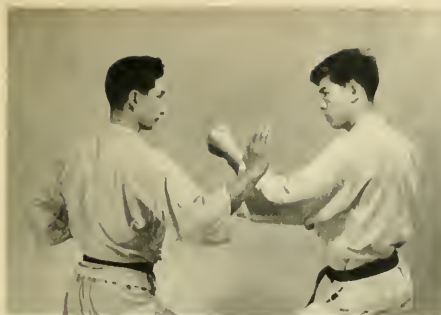
**hooking block (*kake-uke*)**

This technique is performed by sharply bending the elbow and swinging the forearm backward to a point near the ear, hook-blocking the opponent's attacking arm with the wrist. The advantages of this technique are that it requires a minimum of effort and it is possible while blocking to attack simultaneously with the opposite hand.

**grasping block (*tsukami-uke*)**

This is performed by seizing the opponent's sleeve or pant leg, diverting the force of his attack and breaking his balance.





**sweeping block (*nagashi-uke*)**

The force of opponent's attack is literally swept aside with the palm or wrist. This technique allows one to block and simultaneously move in for the counterattack without expending a great deal of energy.

**pressing block (*osae-uke*)**

This is similar to the sweeping block, except that the opponent's arm is pressed down and the counterattack delivered simultaneously. This technique is used mainly for blocking an attack to the abdomen or groin.



**scooping block (*sukui-uke*)**

This technique consists of scooping the opponent's attacking leg with the forearm and strongly breaking his balance.



# 12 foot techniques

In karate the feet, as well as the hands, are important weapons. In no other combative sport are the feet so rigorously or subtly trained; this is a unique feature of karate. Even without special training we are inclined to use our feet both for attack and defense, but with training they can be made into much more powerful weapons. In ordinary circumstances we do not use our feet in a large variety of ways, as we do our hands. Therefore, constant practice is necessary if they are to be made into effective weapons. It should be borne in mind that, like all karate techniques, not just the feet but the whole body must be used in the performance of foot techniques.



## ■ ■ attacking techniques

Most foot attacking techniques, or for that matter most foot techniques, consist of kicking. There are three kinds of kicking techniques: snap-kicking, thrust-kicking, and striking, each of which has its own special advantage depending on the needs of the situation.

In kicking, special attention must be paid to the stationary foot, shifting of balance, and withdrawal of the kicking foot. Since the stationary foot must bear the entire weight of the body, it must be in a strong stance, particularly in the direction of the kick, if it is to withstand the shock of the kick striking the target. Balance must be shifted in such a way that the



kicking leg bears none of the weight of the body, and at the same time this weight must be thrust in the direction of the kick to give it striking force. After the kick, the kicking leg must be quickly and smoothly withdrawn to avoid having it grabbed by the opponent and to enable one to prepare for the next technique.



### ■ front kick (*mae-geri*)

The striking surface in the front kick is the ball of the foot. There are two kinds of front kicks: the snap kick, which makes use of the snapping motion of the knee to kick opponent's jaw, armpit, solar plexus, or groin; and the thrust kick, in which the ball of the foot is thrust in a straight line to the target, much like a punch, to attack, for example, the opponent's abdomen.



Avoid these mistakes:

1. bending the back and extending the hips backward; this destroys balance and prevents the body from absorbing the shock of the impact; the kick is weakened without the thrusting forward of the hips.

2. not raising the knee high enough up to the chest; unless the kicking foot is raised at least as high as the knee of the supporting leg, the kick turns into a sort of shovelling motion, neither a snap or a thrust kick; also, the kicking leg should be bent as sharply as possible.

3. not kicking directly to the front of the body; balance is weakened and efficient use of the maximum number of body muscles impaired.

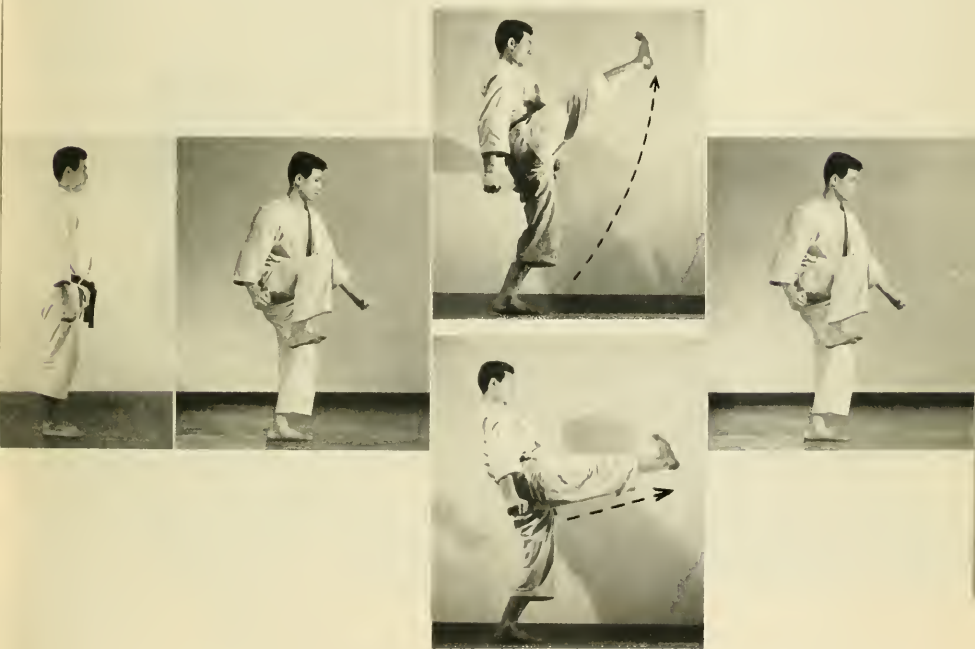
4. lifting the heel or straightening the knee of the supporting leg; this weakens balance and control.

5. lowering the kicking leg to the ground without first withdrawing the knee to the chest (a very common mistake); this creates an opportunity for the opponent to grab the leg and also weakens balance and delays preparation for the next technique.



### front snap kick (*mae-geri-keage*)

Bend kicking leg sharply, and lift knee high and close to chest. At the same time, bend toes and ankle upward as much as possible and hold them there under tension. Knee muscles of kicking leg should be relaxed and ankle and knee of stationary leg bent slightly, tensed, and with toes pointing in the direction of the target. The knee and toes of the kicking leg should be in a vertical straight line, with both pointing toward target. Utilizing snapping motion of the knee, kick upward directly in front of body, striking target with ball of foot. Allow kicking leg to return to previous position with knee next to chest, and then lower to original stance. Of course, all these actions should be performed in one smooth, continuous movement, not jerkily, so that the momentum of the first movement raising knee to chest adds force to the snapping motion of the kick. (NOTE: Occasionally, in making a front snap kick to the groin, the ankle is bent down and the kick delivered with the instep as the striking surface.)



### front thrust kick (*mae-geri-kekomi*)

Begin by raising the knee to the chest as in the snap kick, but rather than snapping foot upward, thrust it outward in a straight line to target; then withdraw knee to starting position and return to original stance. When using the ball of the foot as the striking surface, the ankle should be bent slightly forward. When the heel is used as the striking surface, the ankle should be bent strongly backward. In learning this kick, it is better to practice the latter form, since it gives practice in extending the leg fully.



#### Adaptations:

The front kick may be performed from a stationary position with either the front or the rear leg, or it may be performed while moving forward. Shown here is an example of kicking with the rear leg while moving forward from a forward stance. The upper part of the body should be kept erect and the supporting leg planted firmly on the ground.

Shown below is an example of kicking with the front leg from a back stance, without moving forward. Note that the outward-bowing tension of the rear leg should be firmly maintained.



### ■ side kick (*yoko-geri*)

This technique uses the edge of the foot as the striking surface in a kicking attack to the side. There are two kinds of side kicks: one utilizing the snapping motion of the knee to kick upward; and the other a thrust kick, in which the foot is thrust out in a straight line like a punch. The former is generally used to attack the armpits, groin, jaw, etc. The thrust kick is used to attack the face, neck, solar plexus, ribs, thigh, etc.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. leaning the body too far in the opposite direction from the kick; this makes it impossible to transmit the strength of the body to the kicking foot.



2. pointing the toes of the kicking foot upward; the edge of the foot will not strike target and the toes can easily be injured.

3. lifting the heel of the supporting leg off the ground or pointing the toes away from the kick; this weakens the kick.

4. kicking diagonally in front of the body, instead of directly to the side; this prevents the strength of the body from being transmitted to the kicking leg.

5. not lifting the leg or bending the knee sufficiently; this prevents the effective use of the snapping motion of the knee or the thrusting movement of the thigh.

The preparatory position is the same as that for the front kick, with the knee bent and raised in front of the body.

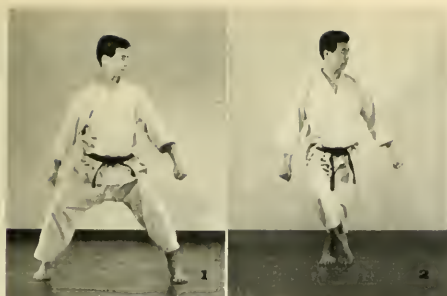
**side snap kick (*yoko-geri-keage*)**

To perform the snap kick, utilize the snapping motion of the knee joint to jerk the foot sideways in an upward arc. At the beginning of the kick the knee should point diagonally toward target, then as kick is completed, twist hip inward and point knee directly forward. Bend ankle inward and point toes downward, so that edge of foot strikes target. As in the front kick, this technique should be performed in one smooth movement, so that the initial lifting of the knee gives force to the side-snapping motion.



**side thrust kick (*yoko-geri-kekomi*)**

Aim edge of foot at target and thrust sideways in a straight line. Quickly withdraw kicking leg to the bent-knee position in front of body and then return to original stance.



#### Adaptations:

The side kick in karate can be performed from any stance, but in almost every case the position shown in  $\approx 5$  is assumed before executing the kick. In the case of the straddle-leg stance illustrated in  $\approx 1$  the  $\approx 5$  position can be assumed directly and the kick completed, or first a double-step (p. 64) can be taken and then the  $\approx 5$  position assumed. In the case of the forward stance illustrated in  $\approx 3$  or the back stance in  $\approx 4$ , the  $\approx 5$  position is assumed directly.

In every case, the kicking leg should be withdrawn strongly, as shown in  $\approx 7$ . Then, in most cases, the foot is lowered into the straddle-leg stance (the  $\approx 1$  position). However, it may be necessary on certain occasions to move directly into some other stance.

**Supporting leg** In the front kick, it is fairly easy to tense the knee and ankle of the supporting leg to maintain a strong stance, but this position is not effective for the side kick, which requires a stance strong to the side. In order for the side kick to be effective, the supporting leg must be bowed outward as in the straddle-leg stance. This position exerts force in the direction of the kick and should be maintained throughout the kick.



## Applications.



Shown above is a side snap kick to the armpit, passing under opponent's arm in the guard position.



Dodging to the inside of opponent's punching attack, a side snap kick is delivered to his chin.

Dodging to the outside of opponent's attack, a side thrust kick is delivered to the side of his face.





### ■ back kick (*ushiro-geri*)

This technique uses the heel as the striking surface in attacking to the rear. Just as in the front and the side kick, there are two kinds of back kicks—the snap and the thrust. The former is used mainly to attack the groin or abdomen, and the latter, the stomach, face, etc.

#### back snap kick (*ushiro-geri-keage*)



#### back thrust kick (*ushiro-geri-kekomi*)

Similar to the preparatory position in the front kick, the knee is raised toward the chest and the ankle bent upward. Bending supporting leg slightly more than in front kick and keeping your eye on the target to the rear, swing thigh backward and utilize snap of knee and strike target with heel. Quickly withdraw leg to the ready position and resume original stance. To perform the thrust kick, thrust heel in a straight line to target; then quickly withdraw to ready position and return to original stance.

These kicks should be performed in one smooth movement and not jerkily. The supporting leg should exert strength in the direction of the kick, i.e., to the rear.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. leaning too far forward away from direction of kick; this weakens balance.
2. kicking diagonally to the rear rather than straight backward; this prevents putting the maximum strength of the body into the kick.
3. moving the body forward, away from the direction of the kick, while kicking; this will make the technique ineffective.



**Adaptation:** As with the other kicking techniques, the back kick can be performed from any stance, but in every case the ready position must be assumed before kicking. It is especially important to withdraw the kicking leg strongly and resume a strong stance. Shown above is the back kick being performed while moving backward from the forward stance. By twisting the hips sharply while withdrawing the kicking leg, a forward stance facing the opponent can be achieved. This is the most basic way to perform the back kick.

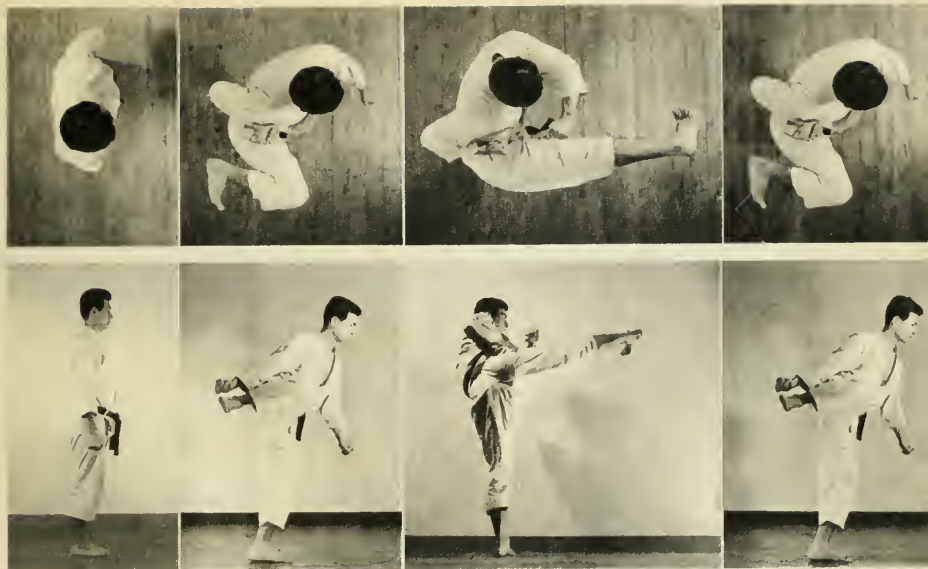


#### Applications:

Back-kicking an opponent who has tried to grab from behind.

A back thrust kick to the solar plexus of an opponent who has made a kicking attack.





#### ■ roundhouse kick (*mawashi-geri*)

This is a technique in which the snapping motion of the knee and the swinging of the hips are utilized simultaneously to attack an opponent to the front with the ball of the foot. It may be used to attack the temple, neck, ribs, etc. Occasionally the roundhouse kick is used to attack an opponent on the left or right with the opposite foot.

Bending ankle and knee sharply, lift kicking leg up sideways. Swing hips and snap knee forward so that foot moves in a circular motion to strike target directly in front of body. For a high kick, at the point of impact the foot should have passed its highest point so that the force of the kick points slightly downward, with the toes pointing slightly downward. The knee and ankle of the supporting leg should be slightly bent, with the foot flat on the floor and the toes pointing slightly beyond the target. At the completion of the kick, snap leg back to ready position and resume original stance.

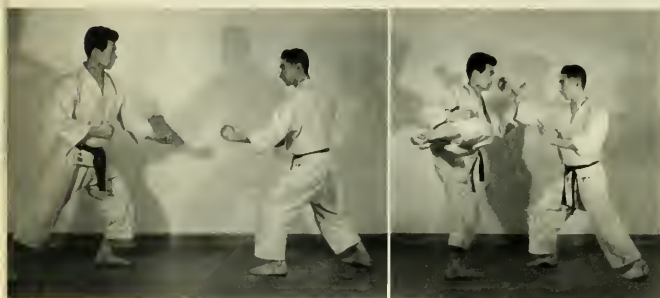
Avoid these mistakes:

1. allowing the body to swing too far; this weakens balance and makes it impossible to focus the kick on the target.
2. not returning the kicking leg to the ready position after kicking; this results in weakening posture to the opponent's advantage; for this reason, it is important that the toes of the supporting leg point almost directly forward.
3. swinging the leg forward without having bent the knee; this prevents the effective use of the knee snap, and the kick is weakened as a result.
4. bending the body too far away from kick; this weakens balance; try to keep body as straight as possible.
5. not bending the ankle enough and allowing the toes to point upward at point of impact; this makes the ball of the foot glance off the target and creates the danger of injury to the toes.
6. not lifting the bent leg upward to the side before kicking; this makes the technique ineffective.



Adaptation: To perform the roundhouse kick from any stance or posture, the ready position must first be assumed and returned to afterward. Shown above is an example of the technique being performed from the forward stance, with the body moving forward.

Application: Simultaneously blocking a punching attack and attacking with a roundhouse kick to the neck.





### ■ crescent kick (*mikazuki-geri*)

This technique uses the sole of the foot as the striking surface to attack in a wide circular motion a target to the front or to the side opposite the kicking leg. It is used to attack the solar plexus, ribs, etc. and is also used widely as a block

Lift leg, slightly bent at the knee, and with a swivel-like movement of the hips swing foot in an arc to target, focusing in front of the body with the leg still slightly bent. At point of impact the toes should be pointing upward and the target struck with the flat sole of the foot. Withdraw leg to a bent position in front of the chest and then resume original stance. During this kick, the toes of the supporting leg should point directly forward.

Avoid these mistakes:

1. swinging the body or the leg too far; this weakens balance and prevents effective focusing of the kick.
2. raising heel of supporting leg or leaning body backward, this upsets posture and weakens force of kick.

Application: Blocking a punching attack with a back-hand block, then counterattacking with a crescent kick to the solar plexus.

Adaptation: The crescent kick may be performed from any posture or stance, but it is most commonly used from the forward or straddle-leg stance. Illustrated below is a basic method of practicing the technique. The open hand to be extended to the side of the body as a target to kick at. As the kick is completed the body is moved forward and rotated so that one ends up facing in the opposite direction from that of the starting position. Be sure to focus the kick directly in front of the body.



## ■ stamping kick (*fumikomi*)

This technique is a downward kick, either to the front, to the rear, to the inside, or to the outside. In the front and rear stamping kick, the heel is most commonly used as the striking surface. In stamp-kicking to the side, either inside or outside, the foot edge is mainly used. Stamping is chiefly used to attack opponent's knee joint, shin, ankle, instep, etc. It may also be used to block or press down the foot of an attacking opponent.

front stamping kick



rear stamping kick



outside stamping kick



inside stamping kick



With ankle bent upward, lift knee high toward chest and thrust foot downward in a straight line to target, whether to the front, to the rear, or to the sides. After kick is completed, lift knee to ready position and then resume original stance.

In stamp-kicking to the front or rear, the foot should not extend beyond an imaginary line drawn through the center of the body. Similarly, in stamp-kicking to the side, the foot should not extend behind a line drawn sideways through the body. The shock of impact of these stamping techniques must be absorbed upward, so a strong posture and stance are essential.





Front-stamping the instep of attacking opponent.

Rear-stamping the instep of an opponent who attempts to grab from behind.



Outside-stamping opponent's knee joint, throwing him off balance.

Inside-stamping opponent's knee joint, throwing him off balance, and preparing to deliver a punching attack.



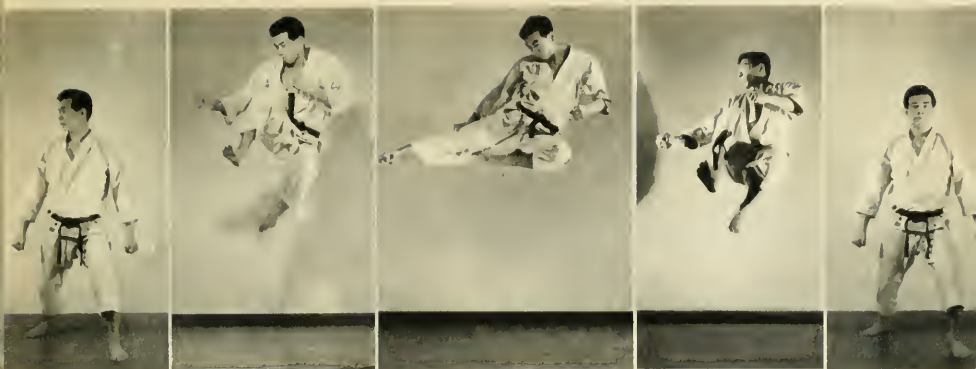


### ■ flying front kick (*mae-tobi-geri*)

In karate there are techniques involving jumping into the air and kicking once, twice, or three times. The double kick is the most common of these. The primary use of the flying kick is as a surprise attack to the solar plexus, chin, or face. A common adaptation is to kick aside the opponent's guarding hand with the first leg and to attack his chin with the second.

Starting from the forward stance, front snap kick with the left leg (in this illustration), simultaneously jumping up and forward with the right. While withdrawing left leg close to chest, front snap kick this time with the right leg. As the second kick is completed, the body should be at its highest point. Withdraw right leg and land in original position, being sure to resume good posture and balance. Full use of the knee-snapping action in both kicks is necessary for the correct performance of this technique. At the beginning, a good way to practice is to kick first with the left leg and then without withdrawing it jump up and kick with the right leg, or vice versa.





### ■ flying side kick (*yoko-tobi-geri*)

Like the flying front kick, this technique is most commonly used as a surprise attack, but it may also be used, after dodging opponent's attack, as a counterattack to the side of his neck.

From the forward stance, jump up with the left leg (in this illustration), simultaneously bringing right knee close to chest. Then while pulling left leg in close to body, side thrust kick (p. 124) with the right. As the kick is completed, the body should be at its highest point. Withdraw kicking leg and return to original position, being sure to resume correct posture and balance.



NOTE. In the flying kicks described on these two pages, it is extremely important to withdraw the leg close to the body immediately after kicking in order to maintain balance on landing, since it is at that point that you are most vulnerable.

### ■ knee kick (*hittsui-geri*)

This technique is particularly effective in close-in fighting. It may be performed straight upward to the front or in a circular motion from the side to the front. It is a strong technique for attacking opponent's abdomen, solar plexus, chest, ribs, or— after pulling him off balance— his face.

#### **front knee kick**

Lift knee and bend it sharply; then kick it up and forward. The back should be straight at point of impact. The supporting leg should be bent slightly at knee and ankle and held strongly. Illustrated on the right is the front knee kick being delivered to the opponent's face after pushing his head down.



#### **roundhouse knee kick**

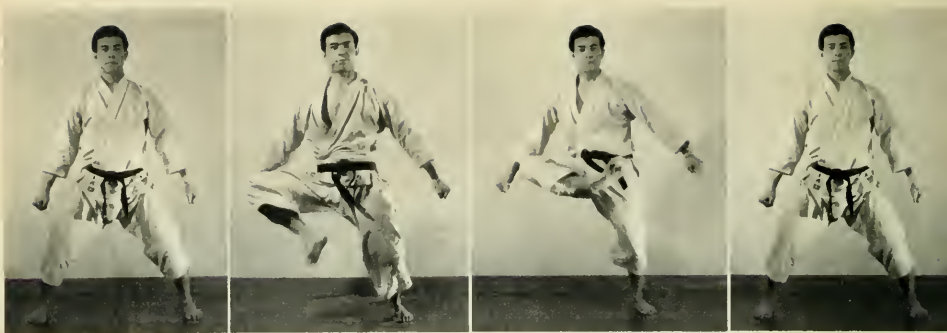
Bend knee sharply and lift it to the side; then with a swivel-like movement of the hips, swing knee in a large circular motion to target. Shown on the right is a roundhouse knee kick to opponent's ribs, after closing in and blocking his attack.



### ■■ blocking techniques

Besides attacking techniques, there are also a number of blocking techniques using the feet. One of the outstanding features of karate is that many attacking techniques can also be used for blocking, e.g., a punching or kicking attack can often be effectively blocked with a front or side kick. In the following pages, two of the most common blocking techniques using the feet are shown. Two important points which should be kept in mind are that the blocking leg must be quickly withdrawn in order to prepare for the next technique and that secure balance must be maintained throughout the performance of the technique. Leg blocking techniques are especially valuable when for one reason or another the hands are not available for use.





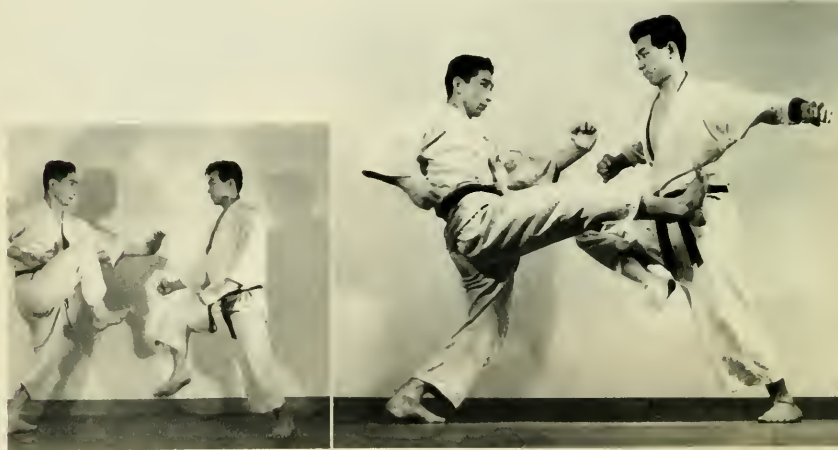
### ■ inside snapping block (*nami-ashi*)

This is a defensive technique against an attack to the groin and also to escape a stamping attack to the leg. In both cases it is very speedy.

The basic technique is best practiced from the straddle-leg stance. Since it is performed quickly, the body weight is not shifted. Its chief advantage lies in the fact that only the blocking leg is moved, leaving the rest of the body free to prepare for the next technique. Using spring of knee, kick bottom of foot upward in front of body and immediately return it to original position. Force should be exerted from the hip muscles to give a "snap" to the upward movement.

Adaptation: This technique may be performed from the straddle-leg stance, diagonal straddle-leg stance, forward stance, and from a variety of free-style stances.

Application: Here is an example of the inside snapping block being used against a front-kick attack to the groin. Note that center of gravity of the man who is blocking does not shift.





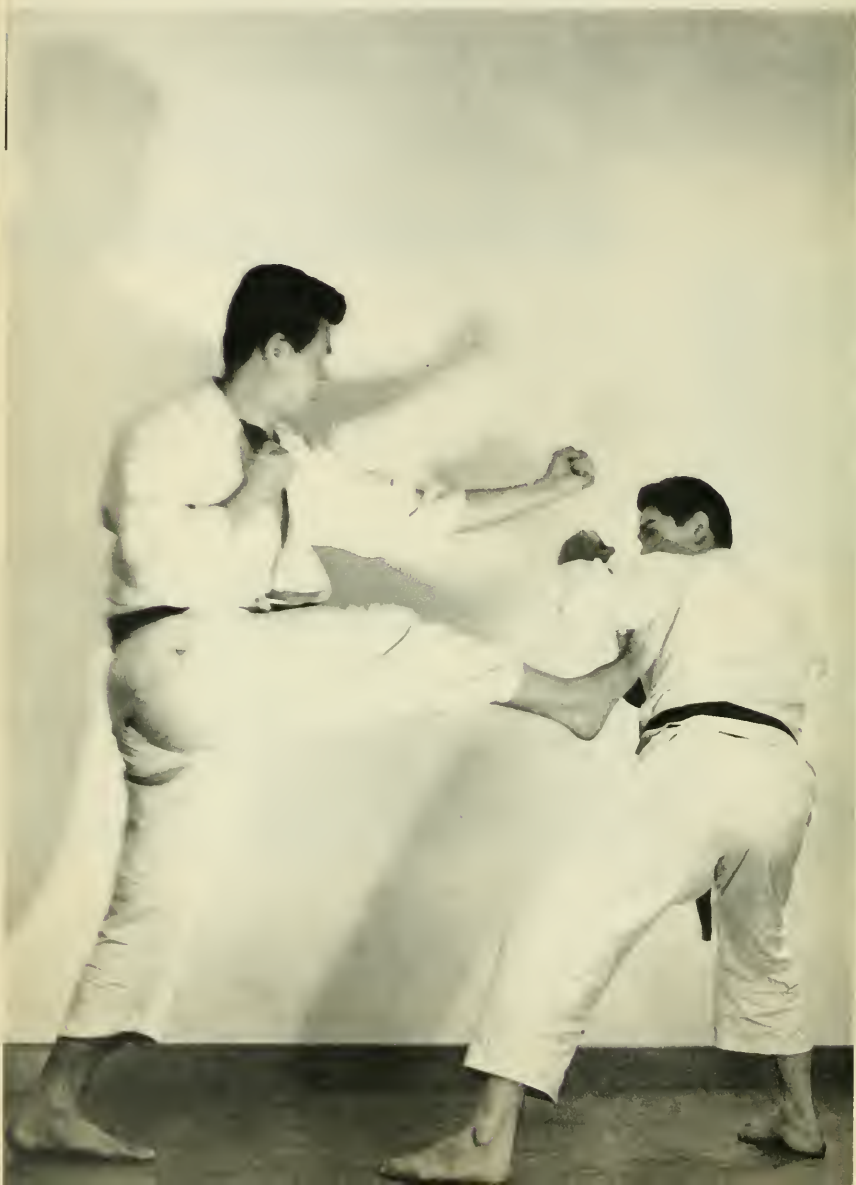


#### ■ crescent-kick block (*mikazuki-geri-uke*)

This is the crescent kick (p. 131) used as a block. It is the most frequently used foot blocking technique. Special care must be taken to withdraw the leg rapidly after blocking.

There are many ways to shift to the offensive after blocking with the crescent-kick block. Illustrated here is one of the most common ones—the blocking leg is withdrawn to the chest and then immediately used in a side thrust kick, without lowering it to the ground.

# 13 techniques in combination



There is practically a countless number of possible combinations and sequences of techniques in karate. For purposes of training, every type must be practiced so that the proper sequence of techniques called for in a given situation will be chosen more or less automatically. This includes shifting from a blocking technique to an attacking technique, from one attacking technique to the next attacking technique, from a hand technique to a foot technique, from a foot technique to a hand technique, etc.

Since the ultimate aim of karate is self-defense, blocking opponent's attack and attacking for the purpose of destroying the ability of the opponent to attack are two sides of the same coin. The most common form of combination is blocking and almost simultaneously counterattacking with the hands or feet.

The ideal to be aimed at in karate is to accomplish one's purpose in the minimum number of movements, either by deterring the opponent from further attack by the use of one powerful block, or to counterattack strongly enough to make him unable to attack again. However, when one's own attack is blocked or not properly focused or when one is attacked by more than one opponent, a series of attacking techniques becomes necessary.

While blocking an attack it is obvious that one must assume the most advantageous position for applying the counterattack to follow, for breaking opponent's balance, and for maintaining one's own balance. If the position turns out to be disadvantageous, one must change blocking hands and move into a better position. When subject to a continuing barrage of attacks, one must be able to continuously block them. Thus, training in sequential blocking is essential.

Even though they may be performed in combination or rapid sequence, it is important that each technique be focused individually. More so than in single techniques, in performing combination techniques the following points must be carefully borne in mind:

1. balance
2. muscular control
3. use of body dynamics
4. switch-over from one technique to the next
5. shifting body weight

The following pages give illustrations of each of these principles.



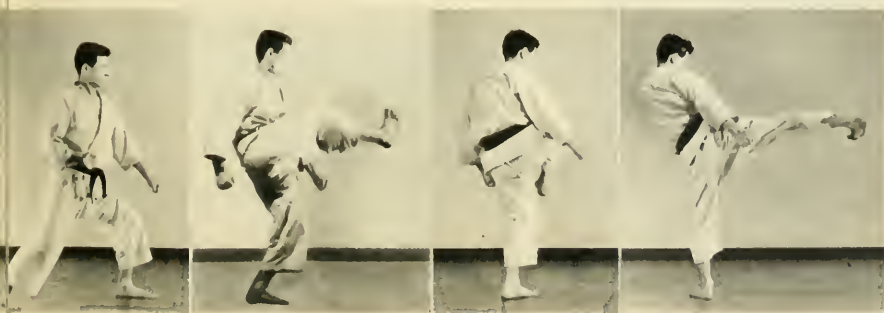
### ■ balance

Special attention must be paid to maintaining good balance while performing techniques in combination, since movement from one technique to the next automatically creates the possibility of becoming unbalanced. Preservation of balance depends on properly executed techniques, correct posture, and strong stance.

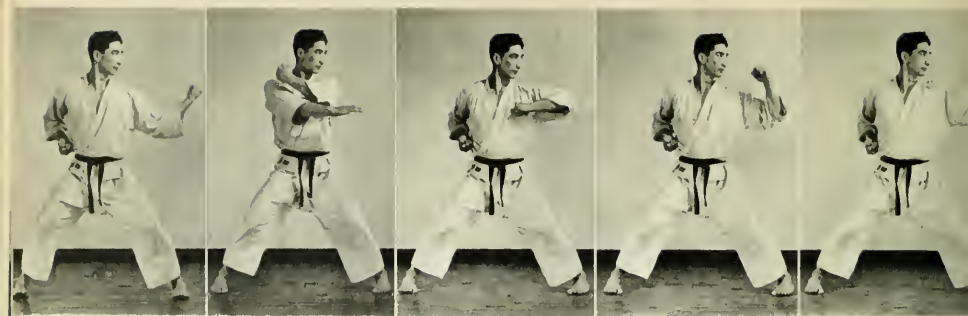
Shown above is a combination sequence consisting of a reverse punch, a front kick, and a roundhouse kick. Note that the posture of the upper part of the body is properly maintained for each technique and that it corresponds to the direction of execution of the techniques. The foot of the supporting leg is planted firmly on the ground, and the knee and ankle tensed at points of impact. Balance may be lost in combinations like this by: lifting heel off floor; leaning the body too far forward; exerting too much strength from the shoulders; and by not pulling knee of kicking leg close in to chest before putting it down.



Shown below is a sequence combination of a crescent-kick block and a side thrust kick performed with the same leg. To preserve balance the supporting leg must be in a strong stance and the upper part of the body kept as straight as possible.







### ■ muscular control

Since most karate techniques are focused at the point of impact, in performing a sequence of techniques the muscles must be tensed and relaxed with careful timing. If the muscles are held under tension after one technique is completed, smooth mobility into the next one is interfered with. This is why it is a basic principle in karate that the strength should be withdrawn from any technique immediately after it has been focused.

Illustrated above is a combination sequence of an outside forearm block, a sideward elbow strike, and a back-fist strike. Since these pictures don't clearly reveal the stages of muscular control, examine the photographs below. 1 shows the condition of the upper part of the body at the instant of focusing, and 2, just before moving into the next technique.

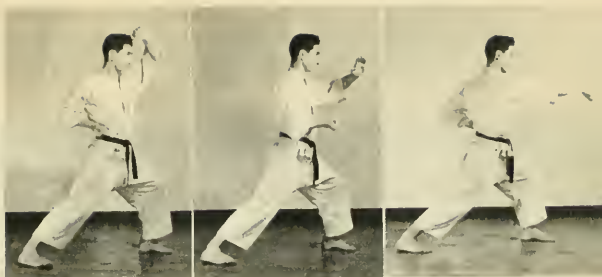


### ■ use of body dynamics

In performing a sequence of techniques, it is necessary to move smoothly and with a minimum of extraneous motion from the posture at the end of one technique into the next technique. Within the limited range of this movement, the strength inherent in it must be applied to the second technique.

Shown above is a combination of a rising block and a reverse punch. The block is performed from a half-front-facing posture. In performing the reverse punch from this position, the rotary motion of the hips is used to add force to the punch.

The pictures below show an example of the straight punch and reverse punch being performed in sequence. In this case, rather subtle movements of the body are utilized—in relaxing the muscles following the focus of the right-hand straight punch, the left hip moves slightly backward as a sort of recoil; this slight hip movement is then reversed to perform the reverse punch, without actually pulling the hips back as in the basic reverse punch.



Shown below is the left side thrust kick and right roundhouse kick in sequence. Here the use of the swivel movement of the hips in shifting to the second kick is clearly visible.



### ■ switch-over from one technique to the next

In executing a switch-over from one technique to the next, the change must be made with maximum economy of movement, smoothly, and with correct form.



Shown above is the execution of a spear-hand thrust from the knife-hand block position. In this sequence, the thrusting hand is moved from the guard position in front of the chest directly into the thrust without pulling it back to the normal starting position beside the hip.

Illustrated below is the rising block performed after completing a reverse punch, while taking a step forward. This sequence requires that the hand be withdrawn slightly more than halfway toward the body and the block performed from there.



The above examples indicate a basic principle in switch-over, namely, that in performing techniques in sequence the part of the body involved must enter the basic fixed course of the technique smoothly and by the quickest route



Shown above is a side kick followed by a front kick with the opposite foot, but in the same direction. The point being emphasized here is that after completing the side kick and while moving into the front kick the body must without fail face in the direction of the kick.

The pictures below show a front kick followed by a side kick with the opposite foot, but in the same direction. In performing the second kick in this case, the body must without fail face at right angles to the direction of the kick.

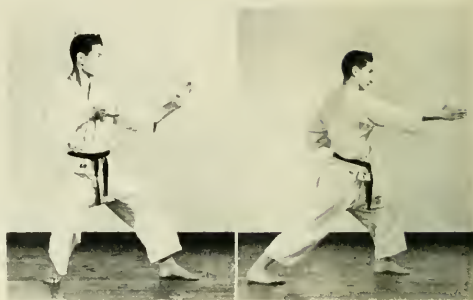


Summing up, in combination kicking the point to be emphasized is that the body must face in the proper direction with respect to the target before performing the second kick. Of course, this position must be assumed smoothly and not jerkily.

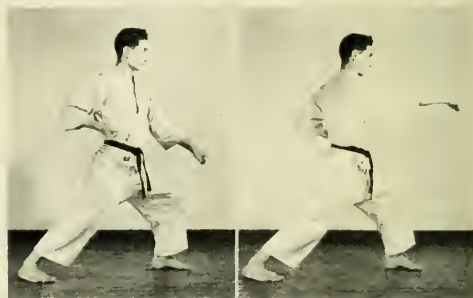
## ■ shifting body weight

Shifting the center of gravity of the body correctly is especially important in performing techniques in sequence. With proper timing this shifting can add greatly to the strength of the technique. On the other hand if the timing is off or the weight not shifted smoothly, not only is the technique weakened, but balance is jeopardized as well.

Shown on the right is a spear-hand thrust being performed while shifting from a back stance to a forward stance. In this case the body weight is shifted forward, adding to the force of the thrust.



Shown here is a reverse punch being performed from a downward block position in the forward stance. Neither stance nor position is changed. This is an example of a case where the center of gravity of the body does not change, although the twisting movement of the hips is used to add force to the punch.



Shown below are a front kick and a lunge punch being performed in sequence. Note that the body weight is shifted forward smoothly in conjunction with the ongoing techniques.





## ■ examples of common combination techniques

### A. Combinations of blocking and attacking

1. downward block (fs)\*—reverse punch (fs)
2. rising block (fs)—reverse punch (fs)
3. knife-hand block (fs)—spear-hand thrust (fs)
4. forearm block (fs)—reverse punch (fs)
5. forearm block (ss)—sideward elbow strike (ss)—back-fist strike
6. downward block (fs)—front kick
7. rising block (fs)—front kick
8. knife-hand block (bs)—front kick (with front foot)—spear hand thrust (fs)
9. outside forearm block (fs)—roundhouse kick
10. inside forearm block (fs)—front kick—(st) reverse punch (fs)
11. crescent-kick block—side kick (same leg)

### B. Combinations of attacking techniques

1. straight punch (fs)—back-fist strike (to the side) (fs)
2. lunge punch (fs)—(fst) front kick
3. front kick—(st) lunge punch (fs)
4. reverse punch (fs)—front kick (with rear leg)—(st) roundhouse kick (with opposite leg)
5. front kick—(st) side kick (with other leg)—(st) reverse punch

### C. Combinations of blocking techniques

1. downward block (fs)—rising block (either hand) (fs)
2. forearm block (fs)—rising block (either hand) (fs)
3. knife-hand block (fs)—inside forearm block (with opposite hand) (fs)
4. downward block (fs)—downward block (with opposite hand) (fs)
5. forearm block (fs)—forearm block (with opposite hand) (fs)

\*(fs) forward stance

(bs) back stance

(ss) straddle-leg stance

(st) stepping (actual change of position of body)

# 14 formal exercise

The so called formal exercises, or "forms" (*kata*), consist of systematically organized series of techniques performed in a set sequence. They include all the various hand techniques, foot techniques, body shifting, etc. used in kicking, punching, blocking, etc. Before the modern system of sparring was developed, these formal exercises were the major form of karate practice.

Most of the formal exercises were created by famous karate masters, and into them are skillfully woven the various techniques of defense and attack. Most of them are based on the imagined existence of four or eight enemies. They provided the base from which present-day karate techniques developed, and are still the textbook of the art.

There are more than fifty formal exercises handed down from the past. Some are very old, others of more recent origin. There are relatively simple ones, extremely complicated ones, those requiring agile movement, others depending on muscular or breath control. Modern students of karate are urged to master a variety of them, rather than concentrating on any one.



### ■ advantages of practicing formal exercises

For those who want to master the art of karate, rigorous practice of the formal exercises is strongly recommended. Some of their strong points are:

1. They enable one to practice alone, no equipment is required, and any area big enough to move about in will suffice.
2. Because they involve various kinds of movements, in every direction, they provide good all-around exercise and do not develop any one set of muscles at the expense of the others.
3. Because they are based on the imagined existence of four or eight enemies attacking from several directions, they provide excellent practice in the adaptation of the various hand and foot techniques to various kinds of situations.
4. Because of their short duration of only a few minutes they are not too exhausting but at the same time provide a great deal of exercise, particularly after the techniques have been mastered so that each one can be strongly focused.

### ■ schematic diagram

The formal exercises are constructed in such a way that every movement, forward, backward, left, right, or diagonal, is performed along a fixed course, which may be represented in a schematic diagram. This makes the exercise easy to learn, and a mistaken movement is immediately apparent. Some formal exercises describe a straight line, others a T, an H, or more complicated figures. In all cases, however, the starting point and the finishing point coincide. This is the final test of whether the amount of stepping and the direction were correct throughout the exercise.

### ■ hints on mastering formal exercises

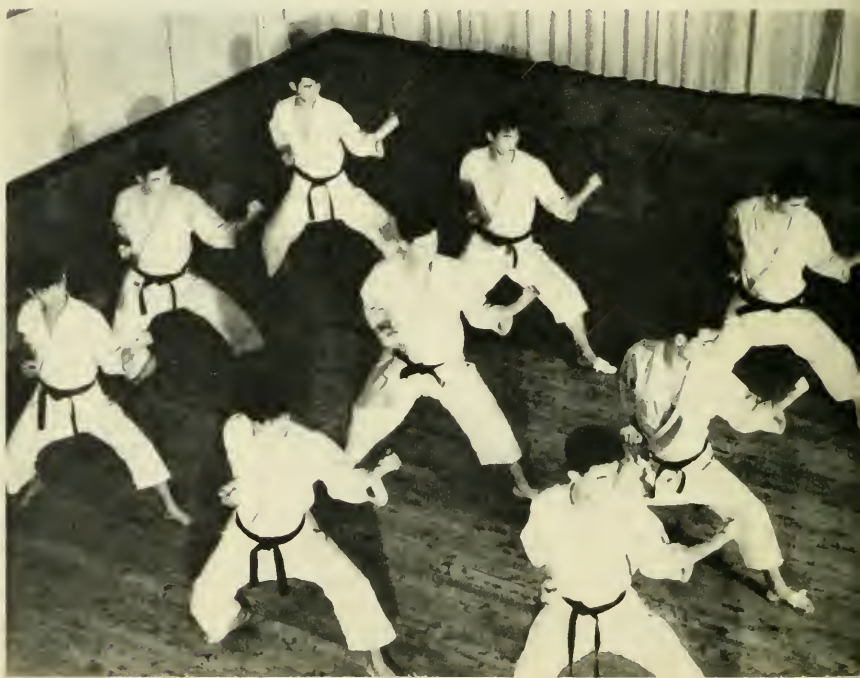
Besides consisting of the correct performance of a number of individual techniques, the formal exercise itself is an organic unit and must be mastered as if it were a single technique. Therefore, throughout the exercise attention must be paid to proper tensing and relaxing of the muscles of the body, extending and withdrawing the striking points of the body, speed and rhythm, etc. These are the so-called "cautions" emphasized by karate masters in the early days of the art. Also important are correct posture, rhythmic expenditure of energy, correct facing of imagined enemies, etc.

### ■ a representative formal exercise

Explained and illustrated on the following pages is the formal exercise known as Heian no. 4, which contains the most basic, and at the same time the most important, blocks, punches, strikes, kicks, body shifts, etc.

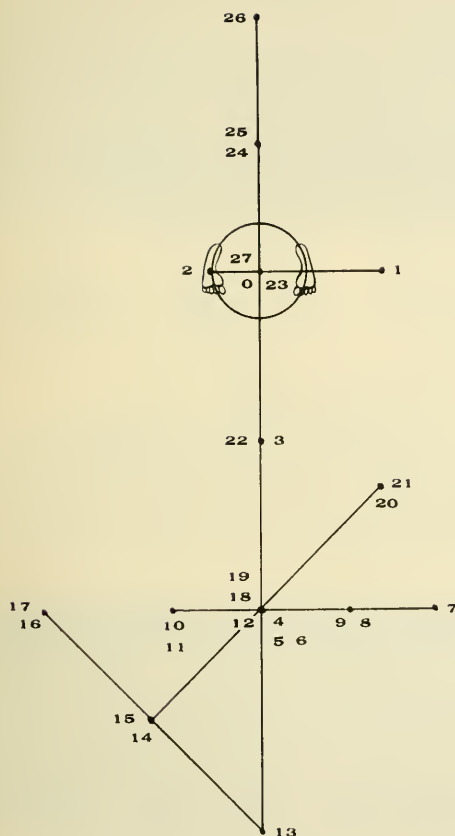
There are five so-called Heian formal exercises, which from the point of view of modern karate are the most basic and practical. They are usually the first to be learned by beginning students. Formerly called by the Chinese word *Ping-an*, probably after the name of the master who created them, they were changed to their present Japanized form by Funakoshi Gichin around 1920.

Among the five Heian exercises, the fourth has the most variation. It consists of twenty-seven movements, and after being learned takes about forty seconds to perform.



# ■ schematic diagram of heian no. 4

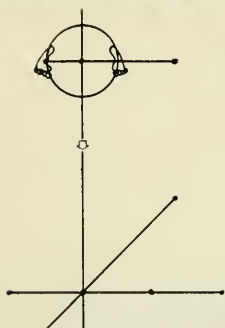
The numbers refer to the sequence of movements, and the black dots correspond to the location of the body at the end of each successive movement



The following pages contain a movement-by-movement breakdown of this formal exercise. Just beneath the top row of photographs will be found in reduced size a portion of the schematic diagram shown above. Superimposed on each of these are illustrations of the feet, which show position and direction relative to the whole exercise and, in the case of intermediate movements, the direction and movement of the feet. The heavy arrows indicate the direction toward which the technique is performed. Each completed movement is indicated by a roman numeral above the respective photograph. The length of the arrow beside the roman numerals indicates the relative speed with which the next technique should be performed.

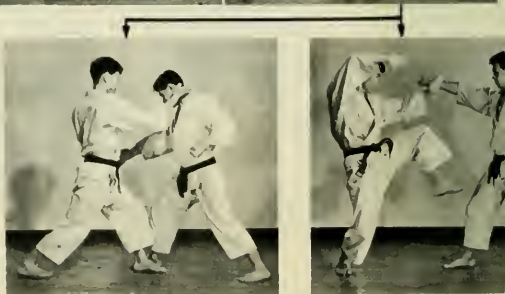


# ■ the form (heian no. 4)

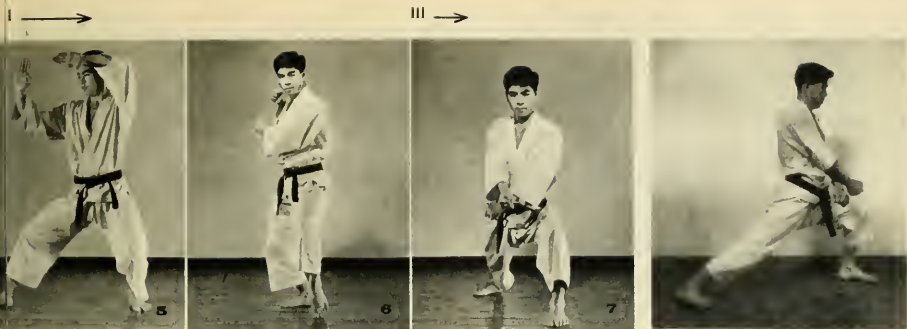


1. Relaxed open-leg stance.
2. Move left leg to the left and left back-hand up ...
3. Assume back stance with weight on right leg; block attack to the side of the face with left back-hand block, forearm perpendicular to the ground; right hand in guard position in front of forehead.
4. Shifting weight to the left, repeat same technique to the right ...

## ■ explanation



After blocking a punching attack to the side of the head, move into forward stance and attack with a knife-hand strike to the neck, or from the back stance attack with a front kick with the front leg.



side view

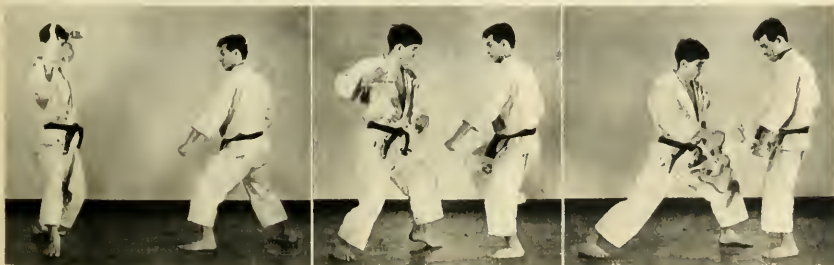


5. Back stance with weight on left leg; right back-hand block.

6. Move left leg to the front; clench fists and cross the left over the right...

7. Assume forward stance, and thrust crossed fists diagonally downward in an x-block; keep back straight.

Move in and block opponent's front-kick attack in its initial stages with a downward x-block.



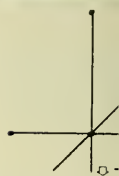
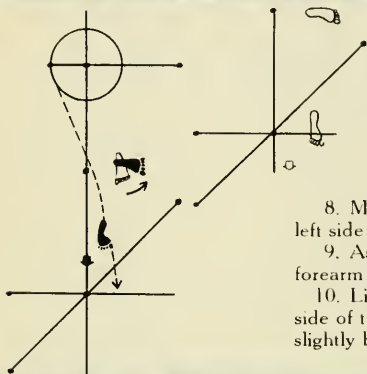
IV →



V →



side view



8. Move right foot one step forward and join fists on the left side of the body . . .

9. Assume back stance and execute an augmented right forearm block.

10. Lift right foot to knee of left leg and join fists on the left side of the body; right thigh parallel to the ground and left leg slightly bent.

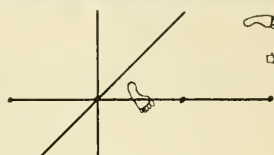
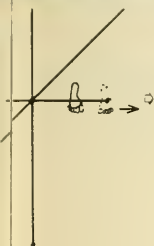


After blocking opponent's kick, he attacks again with a punch to the abdomen. Block with augmented forearm block, using augmenting arm to help blocking arm push down attacker's arm. Shift to forward stance to throw opponent off balance, and quickly change hands. Pressing opponent's arm down, attack with a close punch to the jaw.

VI →



VII →

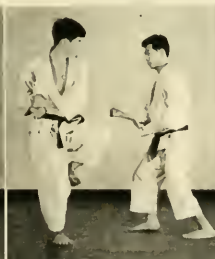


11. Execute side snap kick with right leg and a simultaneous sideward back-fist strike with the right hand; take care not to strike too high.

12. Withdraw kicking leg, shifting weight in direction of kick...

13. Move into forward stance and place unclenched left hand in front of body as target...

14. Execute forward strike with right elbow, striking left hand; be sure to keep body low and fully utilize swing of hips.

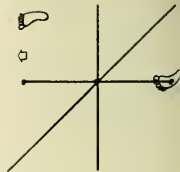
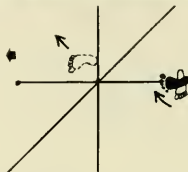
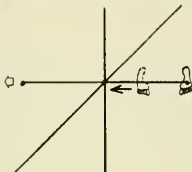
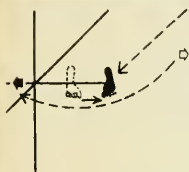


Dodging opponent's attack, counterattack with side snap kick to the solar plexus and simultaneously a back-fist strike to the side of the face. Then grasp opponent's lapels and attack solar plexus with sideward elbow strike.

VIII →

IX →

X →



15. Pull left leg a half-step back toward right leg, swing body 180° to the right, and lift right foot to knee of left leg (reverse of V position).

16. Side snap kick with right foot, simultaneously executing sideward back-fist strike.

17. Withdraw kicking leg, shift weight in direction of kick, move into forward stance, and place right hand out as target

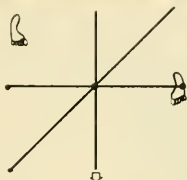
...

18. Strike right hand with left elbow.





side view



19. Block upward an attack from the left with right knife-hand, and simultaneously block downward with left knife-hand...

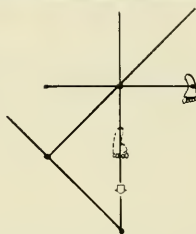
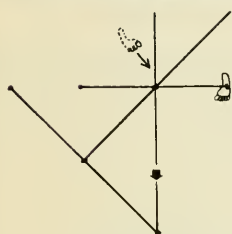
20. Twist upper part of body 180° to the left, swing right hand widely to the outside, simultaneously raising left hand in front of face...

21. Execute outside knife-hand strike to the neck, and block upward with left knife-hand.

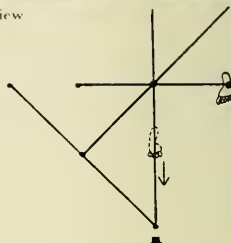
Simultaneously block downward a kicking attack from the left with knife-hand and block upward a punching attack. Upward block next attack and counterattack with knife-hand strike to the neck.







side view



22. Without changing position of hands or upper part of body, shift weight forward and begin front kick . . .

23. Keeping hands in place, front snap kick as high as possible; take care not to raise heel of supporting leg.

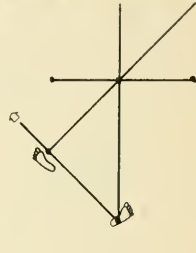
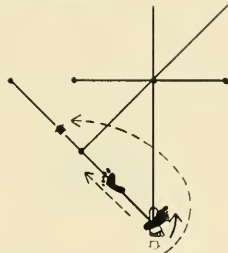
24. Follow through kick by shifting weight forward, withdrawing leg sharply to chest, bring right fist to right ear, simultaneously extending left hand, palm downward

After focusing knife-hand strike, attack again with a front kick to opponent's solar plexus. As he attempts a punching attack, press his hand down, move in close, and counterattack with a downward back-fist strike to his solar plexus





side view



25. Place right foot down forward, and bring left foot quickly to right of right heel, with toes facing right heel and left heel off the ground, at the same time, execute downward back-fist strike with right hand, pulling left sharply back to hip, to maintain balance, keep posture low.

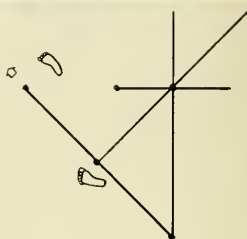
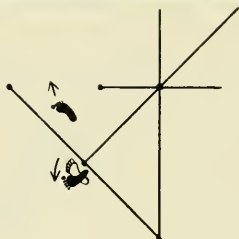
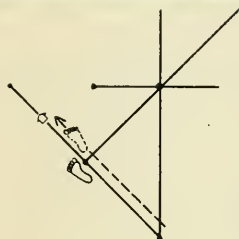
26. With right foot as fulcrum, swing 225 to the left, stepping forward with left foot; keep right knee bent; cross fists in front of chest, left fist in front...

(Note that although at this point you face in the opposite direction from the starting position, the orientation of the diagram is not reversed)

27. From back stance, execute wedge block.

As opponent approaches you from behind, swing completely around to face him from a back stance. As he attempts to grasp your lapels, execute a strong wedge block.





28. Keeping hands in same position, shift weight forward and front snap kick with right foot, fully utilizing snap of knee.

29. With hands still in same position, withdraw leg and continue to shift weight forward...

30. As kicking foot touches ground, assume forward stance and lunge punch to mid-section; do not pull arm back to standard position before punching.

31. From same position quickly reverse hands and execute reverse punch with the left hand.

After wedge-blocking opponent's attack, shift weight forward and attack with a front snap kick with the rear foot. Placing kicking foot down forward, assume forward stance and deliver lunge punch, then reverse punch. (NOTE: One of the advantages of moving into a back stance in conjunction with the wedge block is that it facilitates pulling the opponent off balance before kicking.)

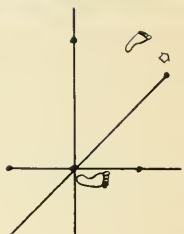
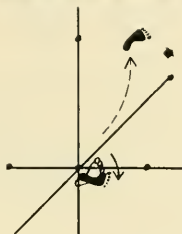
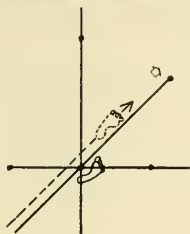
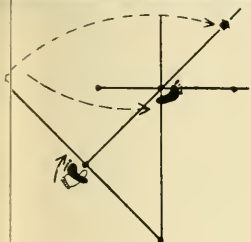


XVIII →

XIX →

XX →

XXI →



32. Pivot on the left foot 90° to the right, moving the right foot in an inside arc; assume back stance and execute wedge block; in rotating do not straighten legs.

33. Snap kick forward with rear foot, as in XV.

34. Assume forward stance and execute straight punch, as in XVI.

35. Without changing position, execute reverse punch, as in XVII.



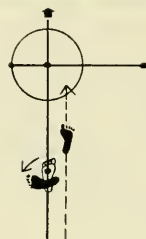
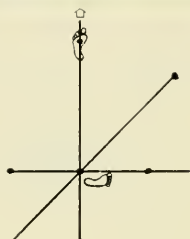
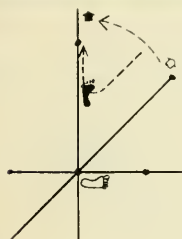
36



37



38



36. With right foot stationary, swing left leg in an inside arc 45° to the left; swing both fists back near right shoulder . . .

37. Assume back stance and execute left augmented forearm block; at this point you should be facing exactly the opposite direction from the starting position.

38. Step forward with right foot, and swing fists near left shoulder . . .

39. Assume back stance and execute right augmented forearm block.

As opponent makes a punching attack from the left, block with augmented forearm block. As explained in a previous section, this position affords an opportunity to counterattack with the front leg or the blocking arm. Shown below is another application, where the blocking arm of the first augmented forearm block is used to hold the opponent's arm while a second inside forearm block is performed against the same arm in a scissors-like motion, cracking his elbow joint.







side view

40. Step forward with the left foot, and from back stance execute left augmented forearm block. While performing the movements in XXII, XXIII, and XXIV, keep legs bent so that head does not bob up and down.

41. Move left leg half a step to the left so that forward stance is assumed; unclench hands and start thrusting them outward and upward . . .

42. Fully extend arms and hands at the level of the face, as if to grasp back of opponent's head . . .

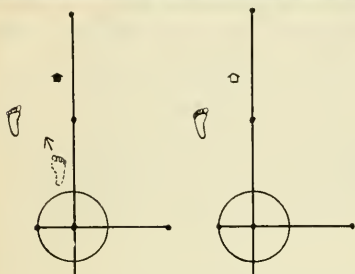
Close in on opponent by moving into forward stance, extend arms and hands, grasp back of opponent's head and pull it down, at the same time lifting the knee up to strike his face.





side view

back view

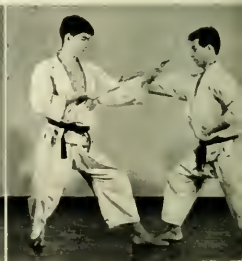
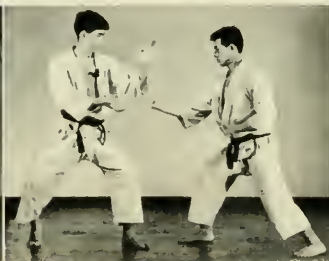


43. Bend and raise right knee, simultaneously clenching fists and pulling them forcibly down toward knee . . .

44. Complete movement of hands, simultaneously executing knee kick at stomach level.

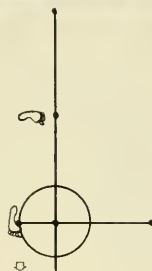
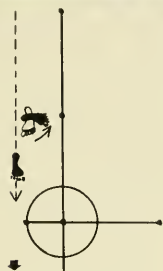
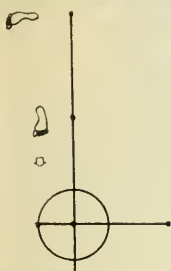
45. Place left foot down one step forward, and pivoting on the right foot swing 180° counterclockwise; simultaneously raise left hand next to right ear and right hand under armpit

As opponent approaches to attack from the rear, quickly swing around and execute knife-hand block.





side view



46. Assume back stance and execute left knife-hand block; to maintain balance in swinging around, keep weight low.

47. Step forward with the rear foot, and place right hand next to left ear and left hand under right armpit . . .

48. Assume back stance and execute right knife-hand block.

49. Bring left foot one step diagonally forward and resume open-leg stance; you should now be in the same position as at the beginning of the exercise.

After blocking, move into forward stance and attack with spear-hand thrust to the solar plexus; then step forward into back stance and attack again with a knife-hand strike to the neck, all the while grasping opponent's arm. Of course, the two consecutive knife-hand blocks of the exercise may also be viewed simply as blocks.



# 15 sparring

As the word suggests, sparring (*kumite*) in karate is a method of practicing the various techniques while facing an actual opponent. In its early days, the main forms of karate practice were the formal exercises, and except for occasional tests of strength (*kake-dameshi*) of the various punches, kicks, and blocks, there was no sparring as such.

In the 1920's, under the leadership of Gichin Funakoshi, a system of elementary sparring was devised. This was gradually developed and refined into the present-day free-style sparring, which can be performed as a competitive match.



Because karate in its early days was used in fighting actual armed enemies and was itself perfected into a dangerous weapon, it wasn't until it became associated with the other Japanese martial arts that the concept of focusing the techniques just short of contact with the opponent was developed, making sparring possible. Mutual trust between opponents, which is said to be an important feature of the "morality" of Japanese martial arts, is expressed in the rules of free-style sparring, where any attack which actually strikes a vital point of the opponent is forbidden.

Besides giving the student practice in hand techniques, foot techniques, and body shifting, sparring also trains him in distancing (i.e., keeping the proper distance between oneself and one's opponent necessary for the execution of the technique one has chosen), timing, and responding. Strategy is called for, as well as courage and composure.

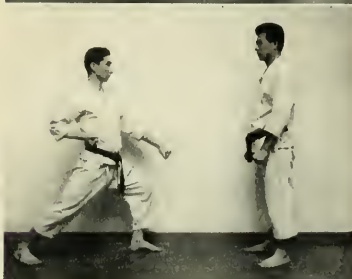
There are two types of sparring: one in which the mode of attack is determined and agreed upon in advance; and the other free-style, in which nothing is predetermined. Within the former are basic sparring and semi-free sparring.



### ■ ■ basic sparring (*kihon kumite*)

In basic sparring, the two participants face each other from a fixed distance and take turns attacking and defending. In every case, the mode of attack and target are predetermined. It could appropriately be called a formal exercise in sparring. The purpose of basic sparring is to train beginners in the principles of applying techniques. The examples given in this section are only the most representative. By referring to the techniques explained in previous sections, and applying them in similar ways, the reader will be able to devise many other combinations worth practicing.





### ■ standard procedure in basic sparring

1. Players face each other in open-leg stance at a distance that will enable the attacker to take one step forward and just make contact with his opponent.

2. Attacker assumes the position most appropriate for the predetermined mode of attack. In most cases, this consists of the forward stance, as shown in the illustration. The right foot is to the rear for a right-handed attack and the left foot to the rear for a left-handed attack. The attacking hand is placed on the hip and the opposite hand extended outward in a downward-blocking position. The defender remains in an open-leg stance. Both players should avoid over-tenseness at this point.

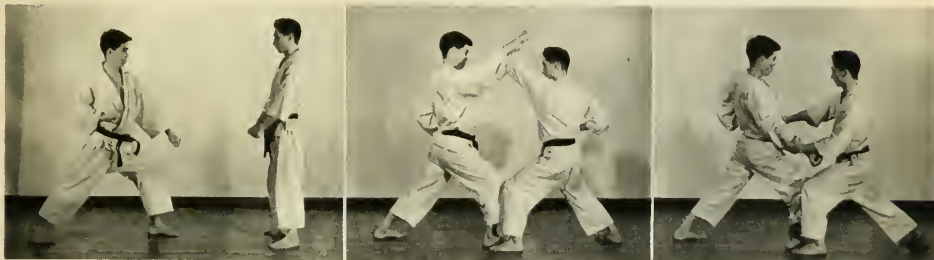
3. Attacker attacks as has been predetermined, and defender blocks, or dodges, and counterattacks.

4. After the counterattack is completed, both parties withdraw smoothly to the starting position. Whether defending or attacking, the eyes should be focused steadily on the opponent's eyes. This may seem unnecessary in basic sparring, but it is a good idea to avoid the habit of carelessness in the face of an imminent attack, which will be the case when the student advances to free-style sparring.

## ■ representative examples

### A. Stepping back, blocking punching attack, and then counterattacking.

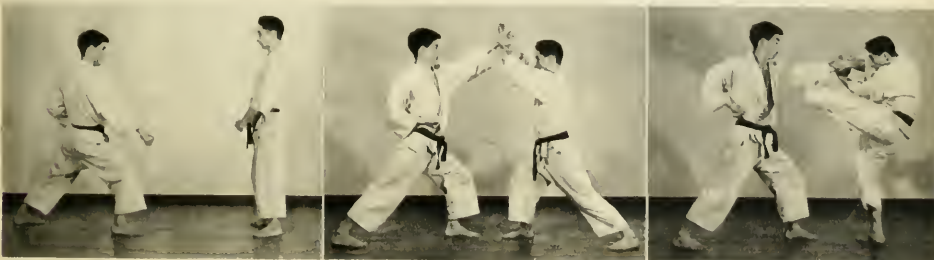
1. Attacker assumes forward stance, with one hand in downward-blocking position, then steps forward and delivers lunge punch. Defender moves one step back, blocks with rising block, and counterattacks with a reverse punch to the solar plexus. In this as well as in the other examples which follow, as proficiency is developed, the length of time between blocking and counterattacking should be gradually shortened. It is also important to practice grabbing, pulling, or pushing opponent's attacking arm to throw him off balance. In these defenses involving stepping back, be sure that the rear leg assumes a firm stance and that the body does not lean backward. The chief advantage of stepping-back defenses is that they allow the defender to control the distance between himself and his opponent.

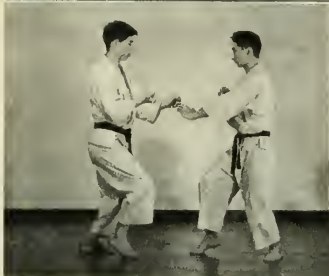


2. As defender is attacked with a punching attack to the solar plexus, he steps back and blocks with outside forearm block, then counterattacks with a roundhouse kick to the temple.



3. As he is attacked with a punching attack to the face, defender steps back and blocks with an upward x-block, then counterattacks with a front kick to the jaw.



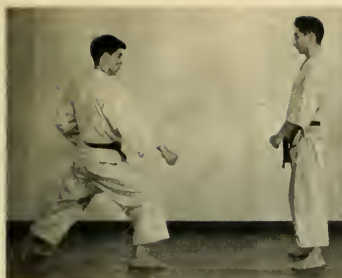


**B.** Stepping in, blocking punching attack, and then counterattacking.

1. A\*: Delivers lunge-punch attack to the face.

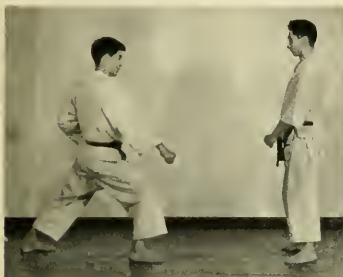
D: Timing his movements to those of the attacker, steps in with his right foot next to attacker's right foot, assumes straddle-leg stance and blocks with outside forearm block, then counterattacks with sideward elbow strike to the solar plexus. In these defensive movements involving stepping in, timing and a good strong stance are especially important. The outstanding advantage of this kind of defense is that it enables the defender to stop the attack before it is fully focused, making it easy to throw the attacker off balance.

\*A refers to attacker; D, to defender.



2. A: Delivers lunge punch attack to the face.

D: Steps into forward stance, blocks with rising block, then simultaneously grasping opponent's hand and pulling him off balance, counterattacks with forward elbow strike. In this instance it is important to assume a relatively low forward stance, in order to block opponent's punch from well below.

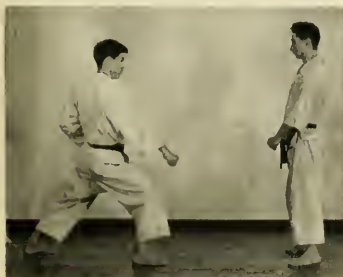


3. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

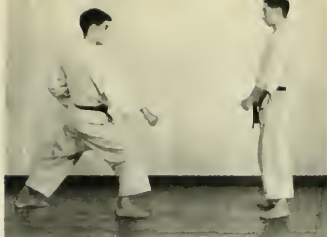
D: Steps in and blocks with downward block, then counterattacks with front knee kick to the solar plexus.

4. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Steps into forward stance and blocks from the inside with augmented forearm block, then with augmenting arm delivers close punch to the jaw.





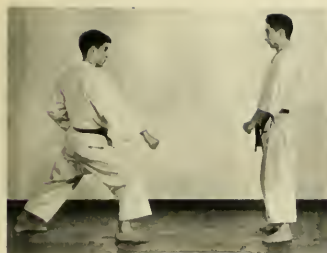


C. Simultaneously blocking and shifting sideways to the inside of punching attack, and then counter-attacking.

1. A Delivers left lunge punch to the solar plexus

D. Timing his movements to those of the opponent, he shifts to the left inside of attack, assumes back stance and blocks with knife-hand block. Then he counterattacks with a front kick to the solar plexus with the forward leg, maintaining back stance angle of rear leg. In all cases involving shifting to the inside, timing is especially important. If the shift is made too soon, the attacker still has time to change the direction of his attack; if the shift is delayed, there won't be enough time to shift before blocking. In defensive maneuvers involving shifting to the inside, the counter-attack must be delivered quickly, for the opponent is still in a good position to renew the attack. The advantages of this type of defense are that a strong attack can be successfully blocked with a minimum of strength and opponent's vulnerable points are fully exposed.





2. A: Delivers lunge punch to the face.

D: Shifts sideways inside of attack and blocks with extended knife-hand block (arm fully extended, wrist bent upward), then counterattacks with reverse punch to the solar plexus

3. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

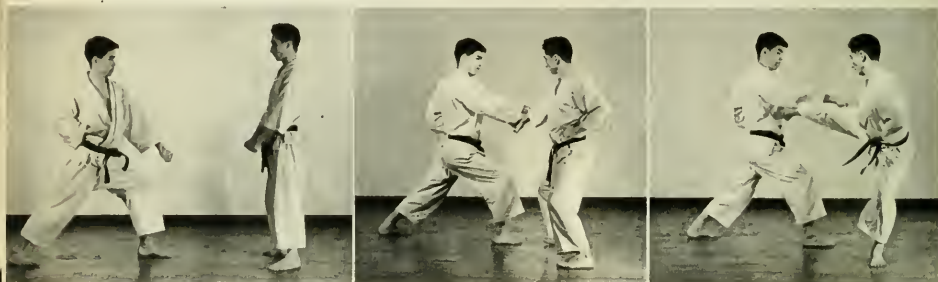
D: Shifts sideways inside of attack, downward blocks from straddle-leg stance, then counterattacks with a side kick to the face or the solar plexus. (As a rule, the snap kick is used when close in, and the thrust kick when farther away )



**D.** Simultaneously blocking and shifting to the outside of punching attack, and then counter-attacking.

1. A: Delivers left lunge punch to the face.

D: Shifting to the right outside of attack, blocks with knife-hand block from cat stance, then counterattacks with front kick to the armpit. Just as in shifting to the inside, in shifting to the outside timing is important. The advantages of this defensive technique are that the opponent is poorly situated to attack again and little strength is required to block a strong attack. Of course, if the shift is made too far to the outside, the opponent will be able to change position and renew his attack.

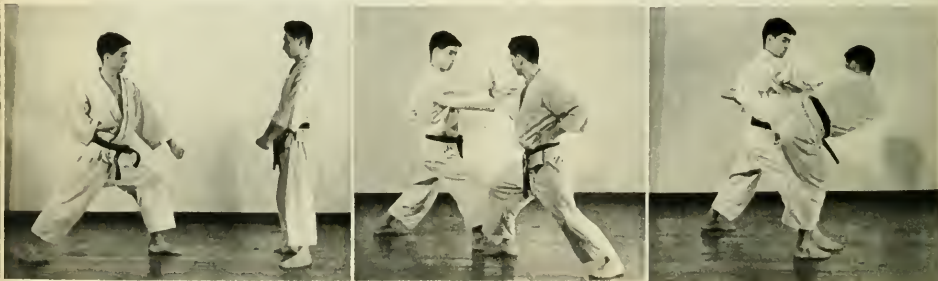


2. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Shifting to the outside, blocks from straddle-leg stance with downward block, then counterattacks with a side kick to the armpit.

3. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Shifting to the outside, blocks from forward stance with extended knife-hand block, then counterattacks with roundhouse kick to the ribs.



### E. Simultaneously blocking punching attack and counterattacking.

These defensive techniques are very effective, but to a certain extent more difficult to perform than those shown in the previous pages. The blocks are performed in the same basic manner as has been explained earlier, the only difference being that the counterattacks are delivered simultaneously. There is a natural tendency for either the block or the counterattack to be weak; therefore, it is essential to choose a block and a counterattack each of which will augment the force of the other.



1. A: Delivers lunge punch to the face.

D: Steps in, and simultaneously blocks with rising knife-hand block and counterattacks with an outside knife-hand strike to the side of the neck.



2. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Steps back, and simultaneously downward blocks and counterattacks with reverse punch.

3. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Steps back about half a step, and simultaneously downward blocks and counterattacks with front kick to the groin, using the foot that stepped back. The step back is necessary to create the proper distance from the opponent for a front kick.



**F.** Simultaneously shifting  
and counterattacking.



1. A: Delivers right lunge punch to the face.

D: Shifts to the left, avoiding blow, and counterattacks with back-fist strike to the ribs from straddle-leg stance. In these defensive techniques where the opponent's attack is dodged rather than blocked, speed, smoothness, and timing are essential. The counterattack must be commenced while shifting.



2. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

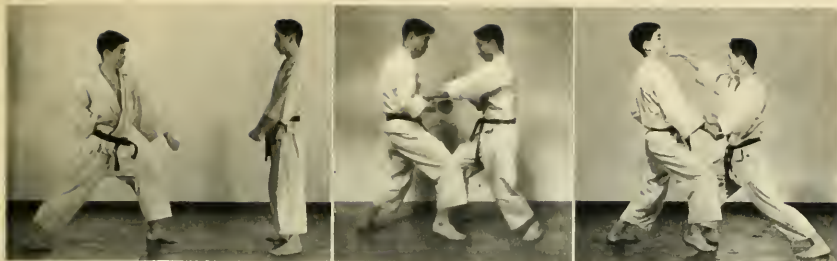
D: Dodges to the inside of attack and counterattacks with a front kick to the chin. Be sure to lift kicking foot to knee of supporting leg before kicking.



3. A: Delivers lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: Shifts outside of attack, and from forward stance, counterattacks with outside ridge-hand strike to the temple.





### G. Anticipating punching attack and counterattacking

1. A: Starts right lunge punch to the solar plexus.

D: As opponent starts to attack, immediately counterattacks with a lunge punch to the face. The performance of this and similar techniques requires fast thinking in order to attack the opponent at the instant when and at the place where he is most vulnerable. The obvious advantage of this kind of defensive technique is that it produces a strong counterattack, since the movement of the opponent into the blow enhances its power. It requires superior timing, instant finding of an opening, rapid movement, and courage.



2. A: Starts lunge punch to the face.

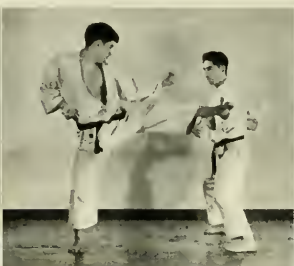
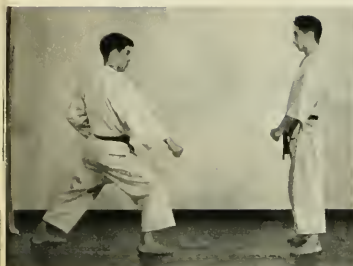
D: As opponent starts to attack, counterattacks with side thrust kick to the solar plexus (above), or outside stamp-kicks knee of opponent's front leg, then delivers roundhouse kick to the ribs (below). In either case, in spite of the necessity for speed, the kicking foot must be raised to the knee of the supporting leg before kicking.





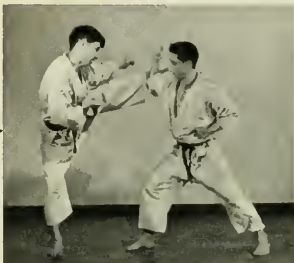
## H. Blocking kicking attack and counterattacking.

Since kicking attacks are stronger than punches, they must be strongly blocked or securely dodged. If possible, advantage should be taken of the fact that the opponent momentarily has only one foot on the ground.



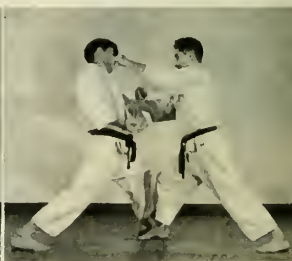
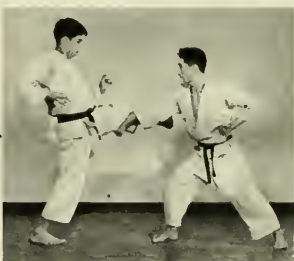
A: Delivers left side thrust kick to the solar plexus.

D: Shifts to the right (outside) and downward blocks from straddle-leg stance, then counterattacks with front kick to the groin.



A: Delivers roundhouse kick to the face.

D: Steps back and from forward stance blocks with inside forearm block, then counterattacks with reverse punch to the solar plexus. In this case, the block is focused farther to the outside than usual.



A: Delivers front kick to the solar plexus.

D: Steps back to the inside of attack and downward blocks from forward stance, then, throwing opponent off balance with blocking arm, counterattacks to the face with reverse punch.

## ■ ■ semi-free one-blow sparring (jiyū-ippō kumite)

As in basic sparring, in this practice technique the mode of attack and the vital point to be attacked are prearranged. However, both attacker and defender assume relaxed ready positions and move about. The attacker must find an opening and create the proper distance from his opponent before attacking. The defender must watch for the attack and be ready to defend himself. As soon as the attack comes he must block or dodge then counterattack. This type of sparring approaches the more advanced free-style sparring, although the same techniques are used as in basic sparring. The student should apply dynamically the examples given in basic sparring. This



is a midway step between basic and free-style sparring. It gives excellent training in distancing, finding an opening, and correct and speedy use of techniques in action. Both attacker and defender must attempt to distance properly, one for the purpose of attacking and the other for the purpose of defending.

After the student has acquired a degree of proficiency in this type of sparring, a more advanced variation is to predetermine the attacker and defender, but to attack at any point and in any way desired

The ready position in semi-free one-blow sparring consists of any which is appropriate for respectively attacking or defending. Any position in which the muscles are under tension is not proper, since instantaneous movement will be hampered. A natural, relaxed stance is the most effective. More movement than is necessary should be avoided, since it jeopardizes balance. In closing up a gap between himself and his opponent the attacker should advance quickly with a sliding step. When he is too close in for a lunge punch he should pull his front leg back next to the rear leg and then step forward with the rear leg. In most cases the attack in this semi-free sparring takes the form of a lunge punch.



## ■ free-style sparring (*jiyū-kumite*)

This is a completely free form of sparring in which neither the form of attack nor the attacker is prearranged. It resembles sparring in boxing, except that the attacks are pulled just short of contact with the target. The rules of free-style sparring strictly prohibit any needless action which is liable to injure the opponent, such as stamping his instep more strongly than is necessary, or striking with great force an arm which is not attacking.



Obviously, there is danger of serious injury if one of the participants actually strikes one of his opponent's vital points with a focused attack. However, one of the tests of proficiency in karate is the ability to focus even the strongest technique just short of contact with the target, so this danger is minimized.

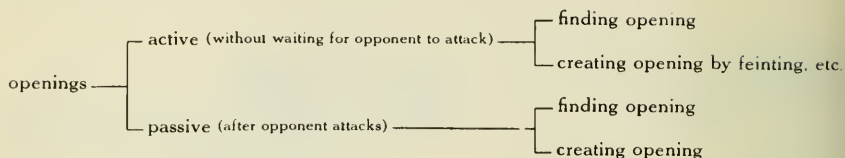
Because it contains elements of both competition and uncertainty and can be played in earnest, free-style sparring has steadily gained in popularity among karate enthusiasts in Japan. However, for beginners, besides being dangerous, it actually impedes their acquiring skill. It has been found that the best order of training is first of all practice in essential basic techniques, with emphasis on proper focusing, then basic sparring, one-blow semi-free sparring, and finally free-style sparring.

The on-guard position in free-style sparring is one of watchful, though relaxed, preparedness. The actual sparring consists of a free exchange of blows, blocks, and counterattacks, until one of the players gets in a focused attack at a vital point of his opponent. Participation in free-style sparring requires expert use of hand and foot techniques, blocking, shifting, distancing, timing, responding, courage, composure, tactics—in other words, all aspects of advanced karate.

## ■ tactics

When the opponent in free-style sparring is securely on his guard, it is very difficult to get in a focused attack. It is only when there is an opening in his defenses that a successful attack can be made. Tactics in karate thus consists of finding or creating such an opening and taking best advantage of it.

The following chart shows the breakdown of openings in karate:



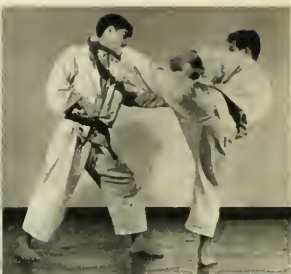
Finding an opening in opponent's defenses depends on training and experience and can hardly be explained here. The best way to take advantage of an opening once found or created depends on the proper application of the various techniques explained previously. The following pages contain examples of creating openings, both actively and passively.





### actively creating an opening

This may be accomplished by putting the opponent off guard psychologically, such as by pretending to relax or by shouting. Also effective is the judicious use of actual techniques, such as attacking or feinting an attack in one direction, thereby creating an opening elsewhere, or weakening the opponent's defenses by attacking in the same direction continuously, or throwing him off balance by attacking his leg, and so on. Here are a few representative examples.



Side thrust kick to opponent's knee, drawing his attention there and throwing him off balance. This creates an opening at his face, which is then attacked with a roundhouse kick.

Thrust heel of palm toward opponent's face, creating an opening at his mid-section, which is then attacked with a lunge punch.



Crouch low as if preparing to attack opponent's mid-section; then deliver a roundhouse kick to the neck.



### passively creating an opening

This consists of enticing the opponent to attack by showing him an apparent opening and then taking advantage of the opening thus created in *his* defenses. As in the previous case, this is accomplished either by psychological means or by careful use of actual techniques.



By lowering one's guard from the face and acting as if to attack to the mid-section, the opponent is led to make an attack to the face, exposing his armpit, which is then attacked with a side kick.



Feinting an attack to opponent's face will lead him to attempt an attack to your mid-section, which is momentarily exposed. This creates an opening to his head, which is then attacked with a roundhouse kick to the temple.

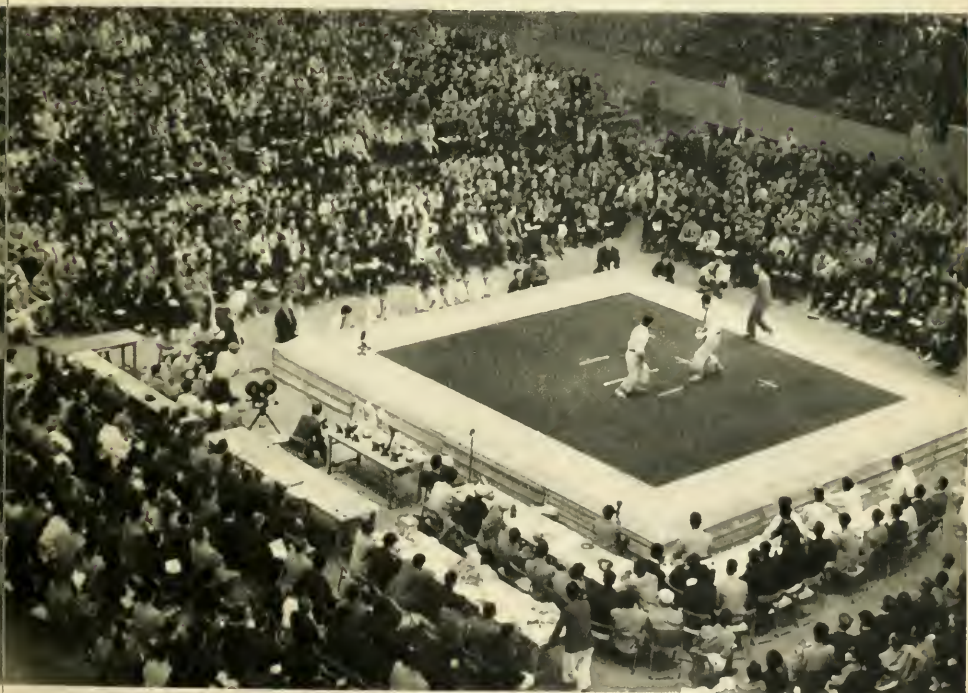
### ■ free-style sparring as a sport

With the development of free-style sparring, it became possible to conduct actual karate matches. The success of this kind of competition depends on highly trained techniques and an attitude of self-control on the part of both participants.

Contest rules for free-style sparring have been laid down by the Japan Karate Association. Given below are selected paragraphs from the official rules embodying the most important points:

1. Karate contests shall be held within an area eight meters (about eight yards) square, marked off with a white or other easily visible border. The surface should be of a smooth, flat material such as polished wood or canvas-covered mats.

4. A single match shall last for either two or three minutes, according to the previous decision of the judges.



5. When no decision as to winner or loser is reached during the stipulated period, a one-minute rest period will be assigned, after which the match will be resumed for two minutes, followed by further one-minute rest periods and two-minute bouts until a decision is reached or the judges call a tie.

6. Judges

a. One arbitrator shall view the match from such a vantage point that he can clearly see the entire contest area.

b. One referee shall move freely about within the contest area.

c. Four judges shall be posted at the four outside corners of the contest area.

7. Other officials

a. Two or three timekeepers shall be seated at an appropriate and convenient location outside the contest area.

b. Two or three starters shall likewise be posted at an appropriate location outside the contest area.

c. Two or three recorders shall be posted similarly.

9. The first type is a one-blow match, in which the contestant who gets in the first "killing" blow wins.

10. The second type is a three-blow match, in which the contestant who gets in two "killing" blows out of three wins.

11. The third type of contest is a decision match, in which the winner is determined on the basis of points allotted by the judges.

12. In every case the type of match to be performed shall be determined by the judges and communicated beforehand to the participants.

20. When neither contestant has succeeded in getting in a "killing" blow, the winner shall be determined by the decision of the judges. When one of the contestants is injured, likewise the winner shall be determined by the decision of the judges.

21. If one of the contestants commits a foul, he is automatically declared the loser.

22. When, for one reason or another, one of the contestants is disqualified, the other shall be declared the winner.

23. The contestant who forfeits before or during a match shall be declared the loser.

24. When an injury occurs during the contest and it cannot be continued, the decision of the judges shall be made on the following grounds:

a. When the injured party is responsible for the injury, the other party wins.

b. When the injury is caused by the other party, the injured party wins.

c. When the responsibility for the injury cannot be determined, the judges shall declare a tie.

26. A completed, effective punch, strike, or kick strongly focused on one of the vital points listed in para. 28 below shall be recognized as a "killing" blow under the following conditions:

- a. correct form
- b. correct attitude
- c. correct distance

27. A less than fully focused blow shall be recognized as a "killing" blow in the following cases:

- a. when the opponent moves into the blow
- b. when the opponent's balance is broken by a sequence of consecutive attacks
- c. when the blow is delivered after throwing the opponent

28. The following vital points only are recognized targets for a "killing" blow:

- a. face
- b. neck
- c. mid-section

29. The following criteria are established for allotting points:

- a. effective blow less than a "killing" blow—3 points
- b. commendable attitude—1 point
- c. good tactics—1 point
- d. skillful or strong techniques—1 point
- e. fighting spirit—1 point
- f. when a contestant is reprimanded by the referee—3 points to opponent
- g. stepping outside contest area—1 point to opponent
- h. other factors determined by the judges

30. The following are strictly prohibited:

- a. actually hitting opponent's vital points with a punch, strike, or kick
- b. attempting to attack opponent's eyes with a spear-hand thrust
- c. biting or clawing
- d. holding or clinching unnecessarily
- e. performing dangerous throwing techniques or other acts liable to cause injury to opponent
- f. turning one's back to opponent
- g. avoiding actual sparring contact with the opponent by stalling until the gong sounds
- h. swearing at opponent, attempting to make him mad, or otherwise showing disrespect

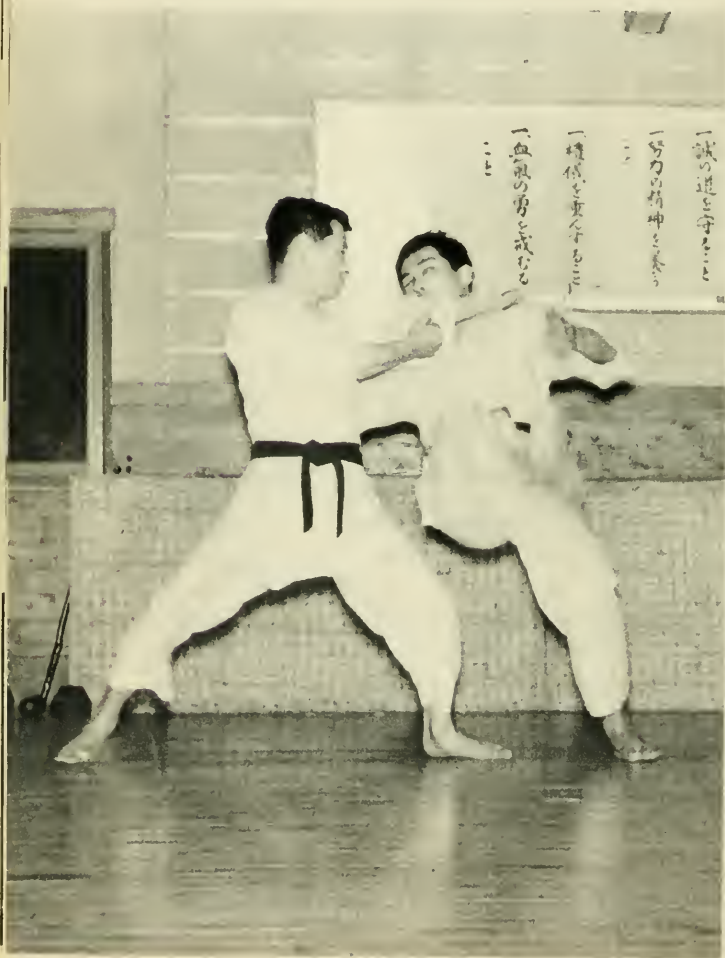
32. The contestant shall be immediately disqualified in the following cases:

- a. when he ignores the instructions of the referee
- b. when he loses his temper to the point of endangering his opponent
- c. other unsportsmanlike behavior



# 16 throwing techniques

Throwing in karate is not an end in itself but a means to create an opening in the opponent's defenses, enabling one to get in a focused attack. This is usually accomplished by first making an ordinary attack and then deftly taking advantage of the force of the opponent's block to throw him, finally making a fully focused attack. In principle, karate throwing techniques do not vary from those used in judo or other grappling sports. What distinguishes them is that they are used in conjunction with and take advantage of the force of other attacking or blocking techniques.





## ■ some examples of karate throwing techniques

Simultaneously block a punching attack to the face with a rising block and attack opponent's jaw with a focused palm-heel strike. Then, utilizing the forward momentum of opponent's body, grasp his wrist with the blocking hand, push against his jaw with the other, and pivoting on front foot, swing around and back, lowering knee to ground and throwing opponent down. Deliver the final attack with an elbow strike to the solar plexus. The main point to remember in executing this throw is to bring your body in close to that of the opponent.

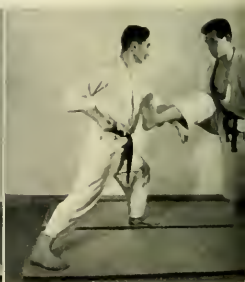


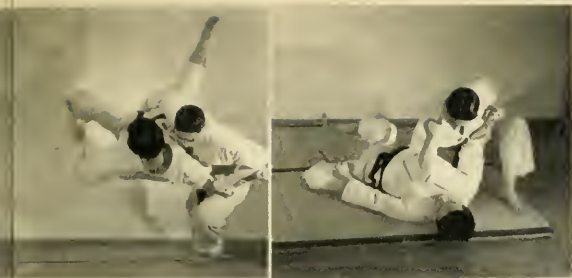


Simultaneously block a punching attack to the face with a rising block and attack opponent's groin with a palm-heel strike. Then, utilizing momentum of opponent's body, grasp his arm with the blocking hand, lift up between his legs with the other arm, and, twisting hips around, swing him over your shoulders to the ground. Finally, attack his chest with an elbow strike. Be sure to place the shoulder of the arm thrust between the opponent's legs into his solar plexus.



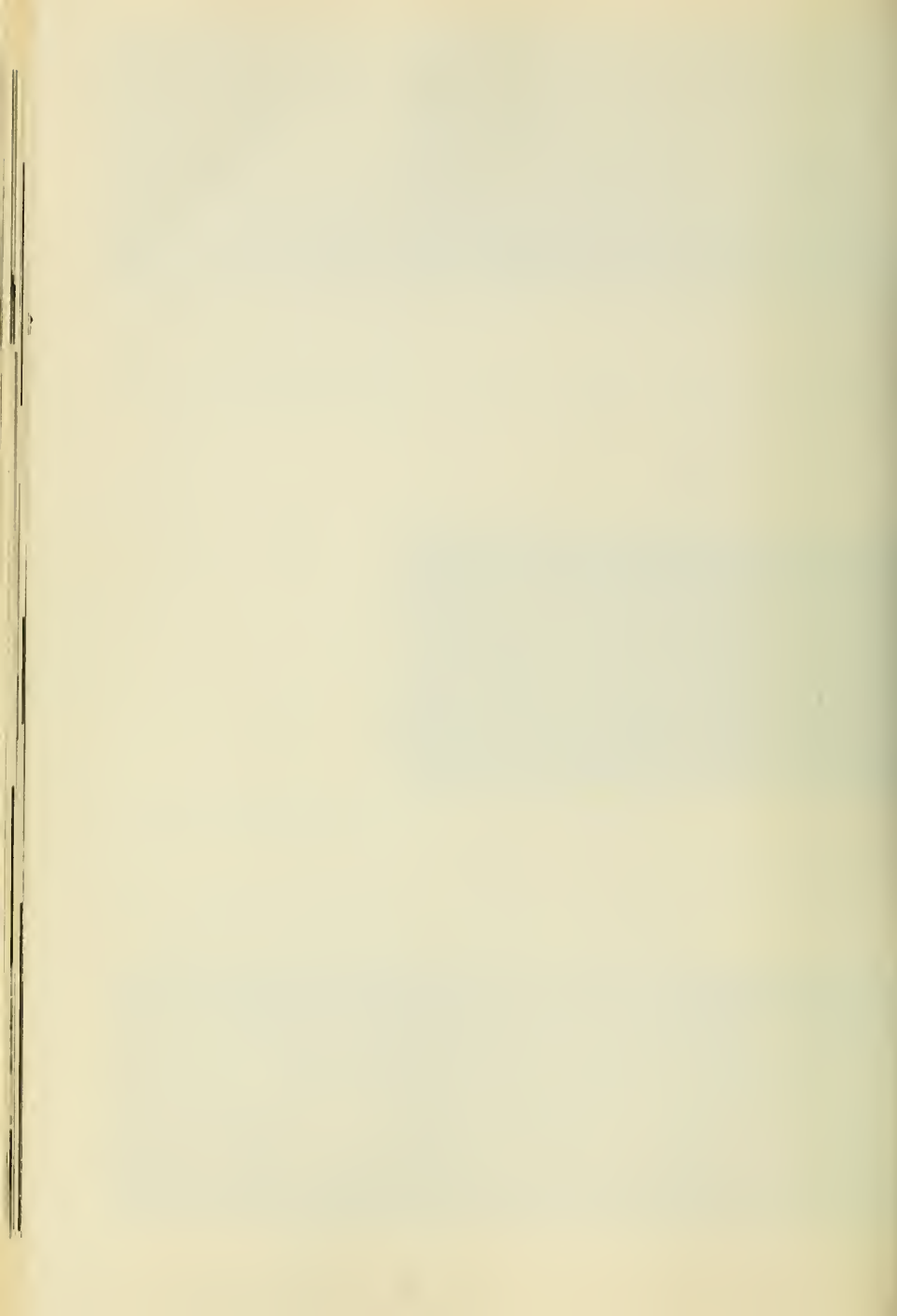
Ducking a roundhouse kick to the face by dropping down on one knee, side thrust kick opponent's supporting leg at the knee joint. As he falls to the ground, deliver a front stamping kick to the ribs.





Strongly scoop-block leg of opponent as he attacks with a front kick, simultaneously moving in close to his supporting leg and throwing him to the ground. Finally, attack with a front kick to his ribs.







PART **3**  
**karate as self-defense**



# 17 defense against holding

A person well-trained in the use of karate techniques can successfully defend himself against an adversary who attempts to hold, hug, or twist his arm or arms backward. Depending on the situation, he may escape and then counter-attack or counterattack first and then escape. In either case he must effectively utilize those parts of his body which can still be moved and take maximum advantage of the strength of his opponent or opponents. One of the chief advantages of karate in self-defense is that even if the upper part of the body is completely immobilized, the feet and legs can still be used to advantage. In spite of this, however, a good principle to remember is that every effort should be made to escape and or counterattack before the opponent has had a chance to get in a hold, and to break a hold, once made, as quickly as possible.





**A.** When one hand is held by both of opponent's hands.

Make a tight fist of the hand being held, place the free hand over it, and moving in with elbow, pull held hand back toward body, simultaneously striking opponent in the solar plexus with elbow.



**B.** When both hands are held.

Take one step backward, pull hands sideward and downward as in the downward block, and kick opponent in the groin or solar plexus with a front kick. It is possible to deliver the kick as soon as the hands are grabbed, but stepping back and pulling the opponent off balance makes it more effective. Also, it is much easier to spread the hands apart if they are first thrust together and then suddenly and forcibly pulled apart.





**C.** When opponent grasps lapels and attempts an attack to the face.

Block the punch with a strong outside forearm block and immediately attack opponent's solar plexus with an elbow strike. In the event that the opponent's arm grasping the lapel is too high to permit an effective outside block, block with the opposite arm, using an inside forearm block or hooking block and counterattack with an elbow strike or close punch.



**D.** When opponent grasps lapels with both hands.

Insert both fists up between opponent's hands, step quickly back into back stance, simultaneously wedge-blocking and breaking opponent's balance; then pull opponent's arms toward you and deliver a front kick to the solar plexus.

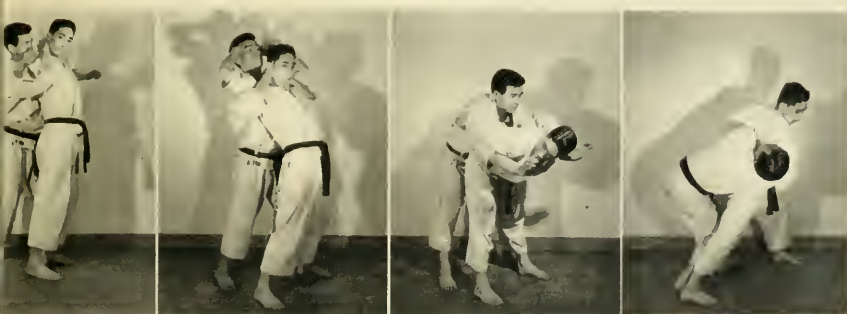




**E.** When opponent attempts a bear-hug from behind.

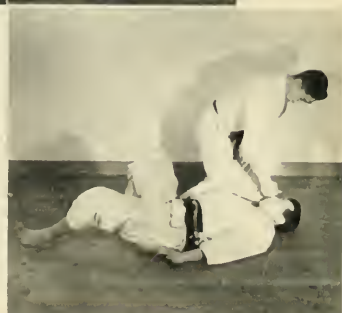
Step sideways and lower body into straddle-leg stance, simultaneously raising both elbows; then counterattack with a roundhouse punch to the face and simultaneously an elbow strike to the solar plexus.

When the hold is too far down for the above technique to work, either back snap kick to the groin (left) or back stamp kick to the instep (right).

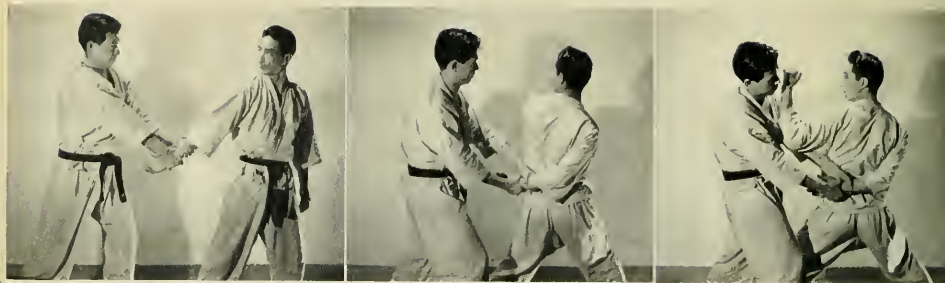


**F.** When held in a full nelson.

Thrust pelvis forward, reach back and attack opponent's temples with fore-knuckle-fist punch, then thrust buttocks back to strike opponent in the groin, simultaneously swinging arms down to attack his ribs with a second fore-knuckle-fist punch. Finally, if a further counterattack is called for, hold opponent's hands tightly between elbows and body, move into forward stance, twist hips and throw opponent to the ground, and then deliver the final punch.







**G.** When opponent uses both hands to pull and twist hand from behind.

Swing the foot opposite the hand being held around near opponent and attack his face with a back-fist strike with the free hand. When the hand is being twisted, remember always to rotate the body in the direction that will ease the pressure on the wrist.

**H.** When opponent pulls hand backward and pushes shoulder forward. Attack his solar plexus with a back thrust kick.





**I.** When two opponents pull both hands backward and hold shoulders.

As shown in the previous example, attack one opponent with a back thrust kick. Then withdraw leg, assume straddle-leg stance, and attack other opponent with an elbow strike to the ribs. Make sure you don't lose your balance in executing this maneuver.

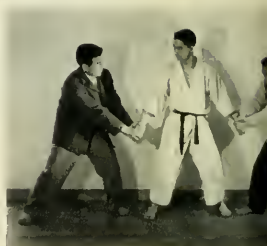


**J.** When two opponents pull hands sideward.

Attack in rapid succession first one opponent and then the other with side snap kicks to the armpits. If the opponents are too far away for this technique to work, double-step sideways and deliver a side kick or a side thrust kick to the solar plexus.

**K.** When two opponents pull hands downward to the sides.

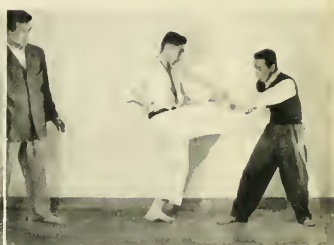
Since it is impossible to kick sideways from this position, in one smooth movement lift leg as in crescent-kick block on top of (or between) one of the opponent's hands and then side thrust kick to his solar plexus. Then swing around and with same leg deliver a front kick to the other opponent's solar plexus.



**L.** When one opponent holds hands from behind and another opponent approaches to attack.

Block attacker's punch with crescent-kick block and with same leg quickly side thrust kick to his solar plexus. Then with same leg attack the other opponent with a back snap kick to the groin.





# 18 defense from floor-sitting position

Even though the body is considerably immobilized when sitting on the floor Oriental-style, with practice it is possible to block an attack from this position.

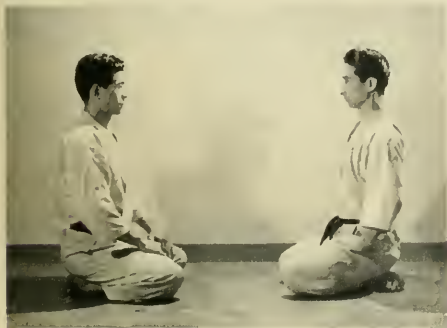




■ some examples of defense from floor-sitting position

**A.** When opponent attempts to grab both hands.

Pull hands forcibly apart to the sides and simultaneously rise up on one knee and knee-kick to the opponent's solar plexus.





**B. When opponent threatens a punching attack.**

Block with rising block, grasp attacking arm to pull opponent off balance, and counterattack with punch to the solar plexus. If possible, it is more effective to rise up on one knee in executing this technique.



**C. When opponent makes a kicking attack.**

To dodge a front kick, lean body to the side and counterattack with a side thrust kick to the groin.



When opponent attacks with a roundhouse kick, fall diagonally to the front and counterattack with a roundhouse kick to the groin.





**D.** When opponent makes a punching attack from the side.

Fall to the side to dodge punch and counterattack with a side thrust kick to the armpit.



**E.** When opponent attempts to attack with a roundhouse kick from the side.

Simultaneously pull opponent's ankle with one hand and push his knee with the other, throwing him to the ground; then counterattack with an elbow strike to the solar plexus. In executing this technique it is necessary to move in close to the opponent very quickly.





**F.** When opponent approaches to attack from the rear.

In the case of a punching attack, fall forward to dodge blow and back thrust kick to the armpit (or solar plexus).

In the case of a kicking attack, fall diagonally forward to dodge blow and side thrust kick to the groin.



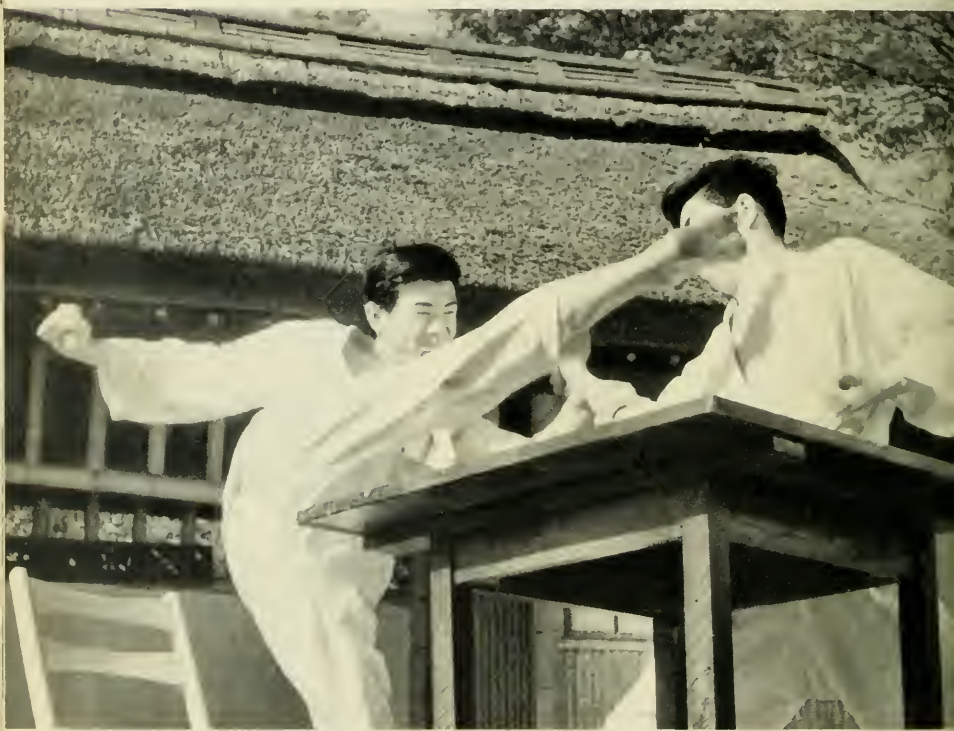
**G.** When opponent approaches from behind to make a choking attack.

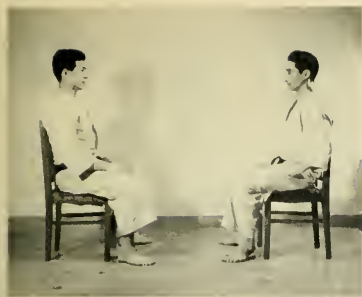
Attack both temples with a fore-knuckle-fist punch; then grasp opponent's lapels, lean forward, and throw him over your head; then deliver final counterattack with an elbow strike to the face.



# 19 defense from chair-sitting position

When sitting in a chair the center of gravity of the body is located near the chair, and the lower part of the body is somewhat immobilized, but with practice karate techniques can be effectively applied to thwart an attack from this position.



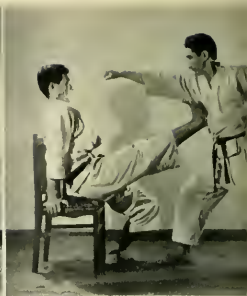


## ■ some examples of defense from chair-sitting position

**A.** When opponent sitting opposite rises to make a punching attack.

Block with upward x-block; then pull attacking hand down, simultaneously attacking opponent's jaw with front snap kick.





**B. When standing opponent attacks from the front.**

In the case of a punching attack, grasp seat of chair with both hands for balance and before opponent can complete attack, counterattack with a front thrust kick to the solar plexus.

When the attack takes the form of a front kick, quickly rise from the chair to the side to dodge kick and counterattack with a side thrust kick to the ribs.

**C.** When opponent sitting beside one suddenly attacks.

Block punching attack to the face with an outside forearm block and immediately counterattack with an elbow strike to the solar plexus.





**D.** When opponent standing to the side makes a punching attack.

Dodge sideways and counterattack with a side thrust kick to the ribs. Note that the defender places his hand on the floor for balance.



**E.** When opponent standing to the side attacks with a side kick.

Dodge to the side and side thrust kick to the knee joint; then with the opposite foot deliver a roundhouse kick to the solar plexus.







**F.** When opponent approaches from behind to make a punching attack.

Move one foot to the side toward the opponent and block attack with inside forearm block; then counterattack with a roundhouse kick to the face.



**G.** When opponent sitting across a table stands up to attack.

Block attack with inside forearm block; then, passing leg over table, roundhouse kick to opponent's neck.



## 20 defense against knife attack

The techniques used to thwart or dodge an attack by an opponent armed with a knife and then to counterattack are basically the same as those used in sparring. However, special care must be taken to avoid being cut with the knife, and in actual application it's a good idea to make use of a piece of clothing, a shoe, or the like. There is a tendency to dodge too far from an armed attacker, making the counterattack difficult and giving the opponent a chance to attack again. Be sure to guard against this tendency.



## ■ some examples of defense against knife attack



### A. When opponent attempts a stabbing attack to the face.

Block attacking arm with extended knife-hand block and simultaneously side snap kick to the armpit (or, if there is sufficient distance, side thrust kick). Then lower foot, grasp attacking arm, pull opponent off balance, and roundhouse kick to the temple. In this maneuver, for safety's sake it's a good idea to lean as far away as possible from the knife while blocking and making the first kick.



### B. When opponent attempts a stabbing attack to the stomach.

With careful timing fall diagonally forward to the ground and roundhouse kick to the groin. It is necessary to slide into a position near opponent's leg for this maneuver to be successful. After kicking the groin, it is possible to side thrust kick opponent's knee joint with the same leg, throwing him to the ground, and then to complete the counterattack.



back view



**C.** When opponent attempts a stabbing attack to the top of the head.

Step toward opponent outside of his attacking arm and block with the back of the wrist sharply bent, forcing the attacking arm down in a rapid circular motion. This maneuver is made possible by the fact that the opponent's arm is already moving in a downward direction. Using same hand, immediately attack opponent's jaw with a palm-heel strike; then, pushing against his jaw, throw him over your knee and complete the counterattack with a punch to the face. For safety's sake, the hand holding the knife should be squeezed between the body and elbow during the throw.





**D.** When opponent attempts an upward stabbing attack to the neck.

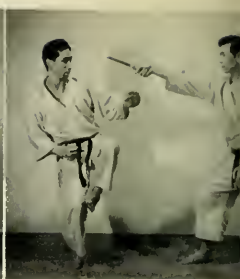
Dodge blow by turning diagonally to the rear and leaning forward; then counterattack with a back thrust kick to the armpit.

**E.** When opponent attempts a backhanded slashing attack to the stomach.

Anticipating attack, move in and block attacking arm with knife-hand block, forcing it down; quickly grasp opponent's arm and counterattack with a reverse punch to the face.







**F.** When opponent attempts an upward slashing attack.

With careful timing and distancing, lean back to dodge attack and side snap kick to the armpit. To minimize the danger of a second attack, while kicking grasp the hand holding the knife.

**G.** When opponent attempts a slashing attack to the legs.

Lift leg as in inside snapping block to dodge attack, and without lowering it to the ground, side thrust kick to the face. To prevent a second attack, grasp opponent's arm while kicking.



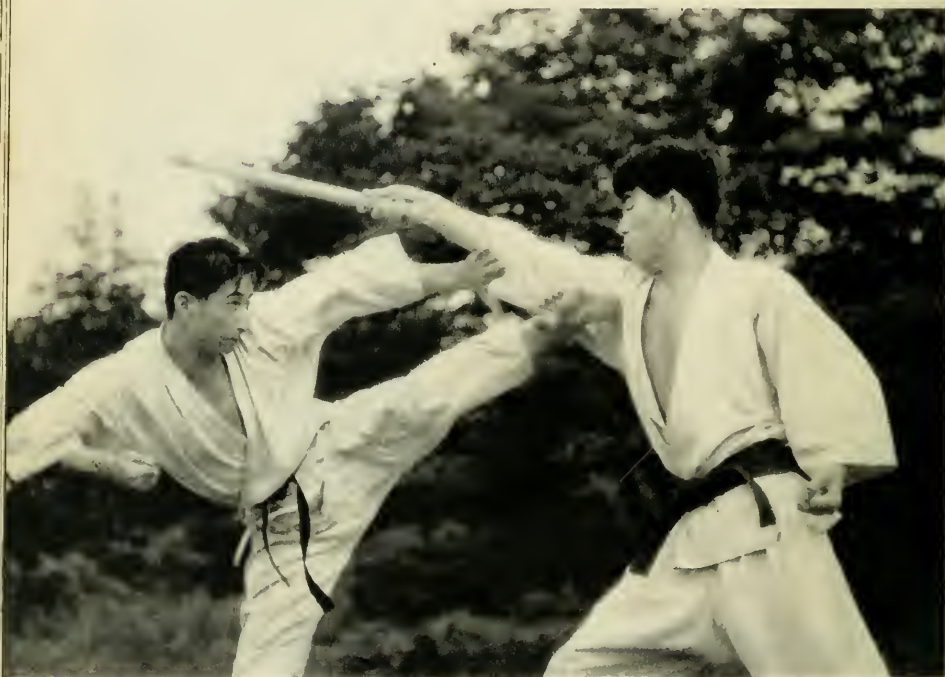


**H.** When opponent attempts a close slashing attack to the face or neck.

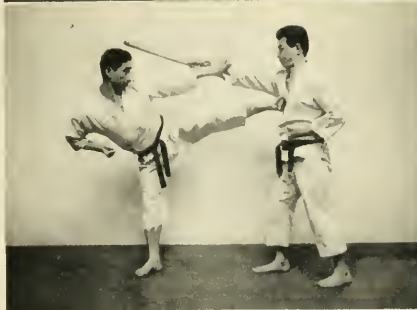
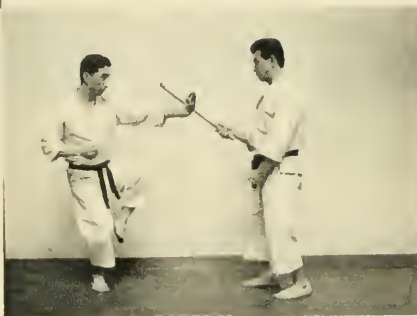
Fall sideward to dodge attack and as opponent brings his arm back in a backhanded stab, counter-attack with a back thrust kick to the ribs

## 21 defense against attack by club

The most important element in defending against attacks by such weapons is effective body shifting. After dodging outside of the attack, you must close in rapidly for the counterattack.



■ some examples of defense against attack by club



**A.** When opponent attempts a jabbing attack to the face with a club.

Block with extended knife-hand block; then side thrust kick to the armpit (if the distance is too short, side snap kick). Lower leg, grasp opponent's attacking arm to throw him off balance, and reverse punch to his face.



**B.** When opponent attempts a smashing attack to the top of the head with a club.

Anticipating attack, push strongly against elbow joint of attacking arm; then slide in and counterattack with a forward elbow strike to the solar plexus.



**C.** When opponent attempts a roundhouse attack to the temple with a club.

Block with rising (knife-hand) block and simultaneously counterattack with knife-hand strike to the neck. (See explanation of this technique on page 177.)







**D.** When opponent attempts a backhanded attack to the face with a club.

With careful timing, lean sideways to dodge attack, blocking with a sliding block, and simultaneously counterattacking with a roundhouse kick to the face (or the solar plexus, or the groin).



**E.** When opponent attempts a backhanded attack to the stomach with a club.

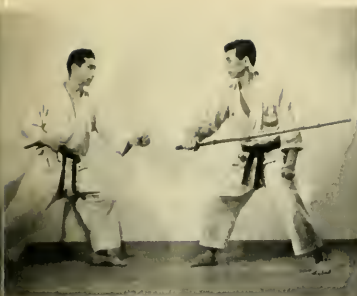
With careful timing, fall diagonally forward and counter-attack with a roundhouse kick to the stomach.





**F.** When opponent attempts a diagonal strike to the head or neck with a rod.

Step quickly back one step to dodge blow and as opponent brings his arm forward again in a backhanded strike, move in quickly and counterattack with a front kick to the armpit and a reverse punch to the face.



**G.** When opponent threatens a backhanded strike to the stomach with a rod.

Dodge diagonally toward opponent outside of attack, leaning body away from direction of attack and blocking with sliding block; then counterattack with a roundhouse kick to the solar plexus.



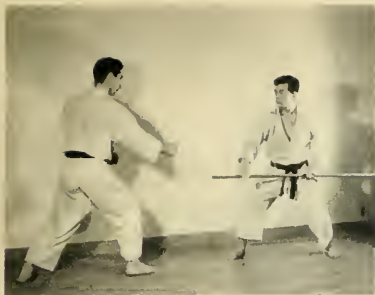
**H.** When opponent threatens a downward strike with a rod.

Dodge inside of attack and block with extended knife-hand block; then throwing opponent off balance, counterattack with a reverse punch to the face.



**1.** When opponent threatens a downward strike with a pole.

Move in with one step and block pole with palms of both hands, the thumb side of the upper hand pointing downward and the thumb of the lower hand pointing forward. Move in farther with a sliding step, twist pole and force it downward to throw opponent off balance; then counterattack with a front kick to the solar plexus.



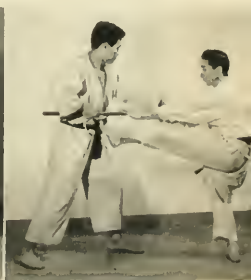
**J.** When opponent threatens a backhanded strike to the legs with a pole.

Jump up to dodge blow, simultaneously executing a front kick to the face; then complete the counterattack with a punch to the face.



**K.** When opponent threatens a jabbing attack with a pole.

Dodge quickly to the inside of the attack, grasp pole with both hands, assume straddle-leg stance, and counterattack with a front kick to the solar plexus. For the sake of clarity, the last photograph was taken from the opposite side.





## 22 defense against pistol threat

When one is threatened by an assailant armed with a pistol from a distance, there's little that can be done other than bluff it out or, if the opportunity presents itself, quickly seek cover. But in the event of a hold-up at close range within reach of the hands or feet, karate techniques can be used to thwart the attack and to deliver an effective counterattack. One point to be especially borne in mind is the importance of finding and taking advantage of any lapses in the attacker's attention.



■ some examples of defense against pistol threat



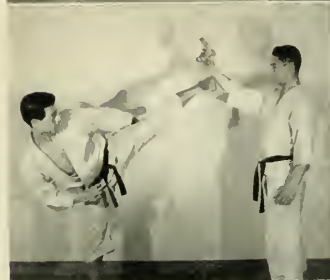
**A.** When opponent pushes a pistol against the stomach.

Swing one hand quickly down to strike hand holding pistol with open hand, forcing it away from the body; then, holding opponent's hand firmly, counterattack with a front kick to the groin and then with a reverse punch to the face.



**B.** When opponent a short distance to the front threatens with a pistol.

Side snap kick arm holding pistol; then quickly step in and counterattack with a reverse punch to the solar plexus. To avoid putting the opponent on his guard, the movements preparatory to kicking in this maneuver must be performed as subtly as possible.



**C.** When opponent to the side holds a pistol against the temple.

Simultaneously turn body and ward off pistol with knife-hand block; then, holding opponent's hand, counterattack with a knife-hand strike to the neck.





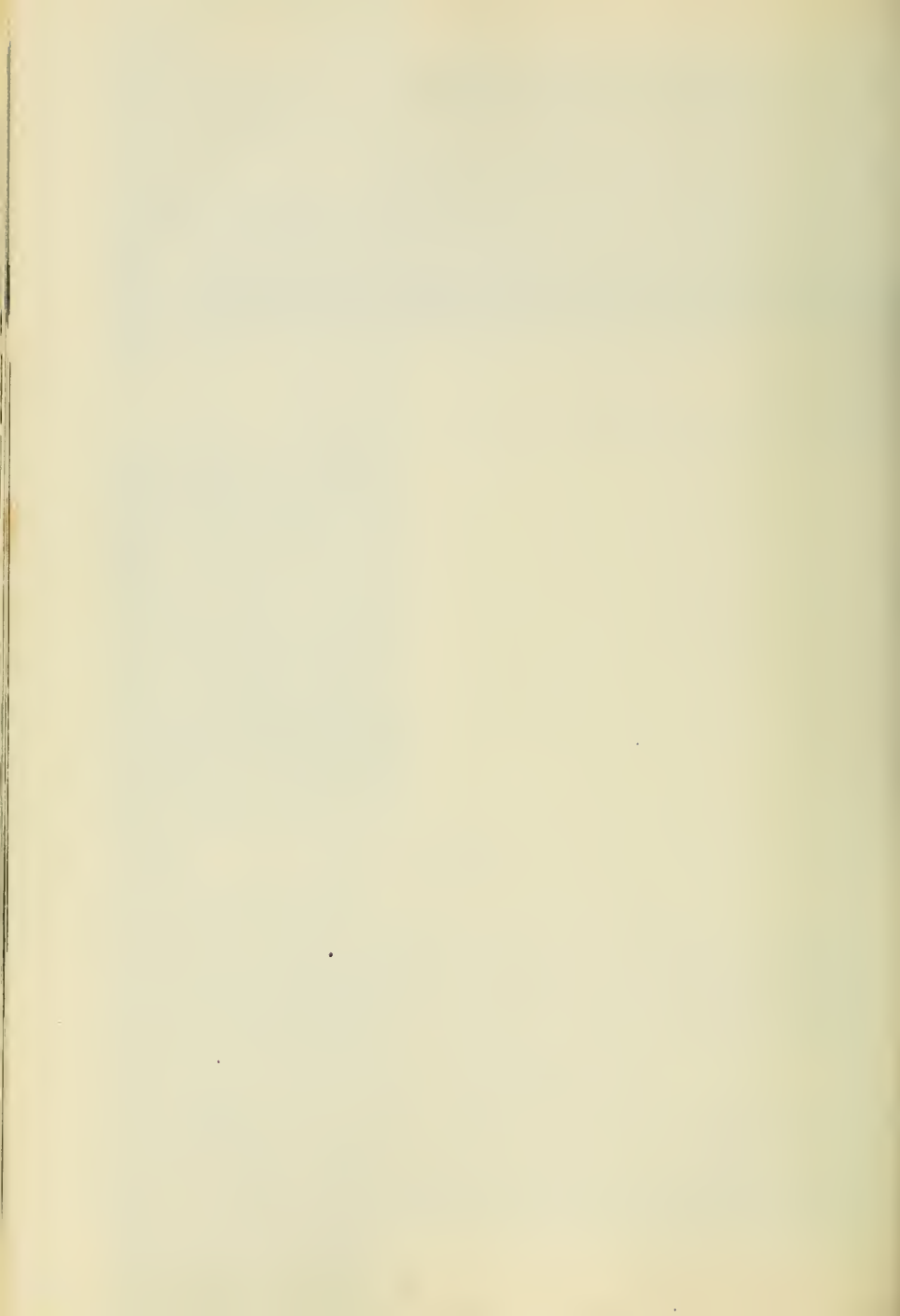
**D.** When opponent a short distance to the side threatens with a pistol.

In one movement twist body, block downward with knife-hand block, and counterattack with a roundhouse kick to the chest.



**E.** When opponent presses pistol into the small of the back.

Simultaneously turn, step back, and block with downward block; then grasp opponent's pistol hand, pull him off balance, and counterattack with a forward elbow strike to the solar plexus.



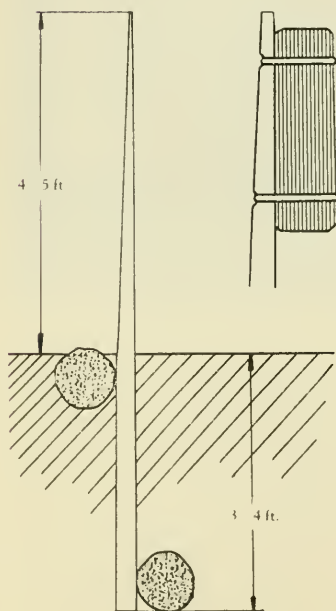


# karate equipment and its use



## ■ punching board

The punching board (*makiwara*) is a piece of equipment unique to karate and is especially essential in toughening the hands and giving training in hand techniques. It consists merely of a straight board with a portion at the top fitted for punching. The board itself is made from a four-by-four seven or eight feet long. The top four feet are beveled down so that the very top is about half an inch thick. In Japan the striking surface of the punching board has traditionally consisted of a bundle of straw with a one-half inch straw rope tightly wound around it at the top part of the board for about one foot. Recently, a piece of sponge rubber two inches thick, four inches wide, and twelve inches long, covered with canvas, has come into wide use.



### how to make and install

1. Dig a hole in the ground three or four feet deep, plant the unbeveled end of the board in it so that the top reaches a point near the top of the chest, and pack with small and large stones, as shown in the diagram. Concrete will serve the purpose even better. After planting, the top of the board should move five or six inches without exerting too much pressure. It is better to have the board too flexible than not flexible enough.

2. Attach the straw and straw rope or canvas-covered sponge (with strong, fine twine) near the top of the board so that the center of the striking surface comes to a height even with the solar plexus.

### **purpose**

1. A punching board is an excellent way to get the feel of karate techniques applied to an actual target, rather than into the empty air. It gives practice in focusing, muscular control, breath control, etc.

2. Use of the punching board develops stronger techniques.

3. It is a convenient way to toughen the skin of the knuckles and other striking points.

Because it is difficult to master the technique of focus, i.e., concentration of strength at the moment of impact, without practicing on a punching board, many karate experts feel that the techniques of those who don't use one are bound to lack power.

### **how to use**

The punching board is used mainly for practicing hand techniques, although foot techniques also are sometimes practiced on it. Shown here are some typical examples of its use with hand techniques. In all cases, the point of focus is about two inches on the other side of the board when it is stationary. At the point of impact, sharply let out a short breath, breathing in while withdrawing. This gives good training in breath control.

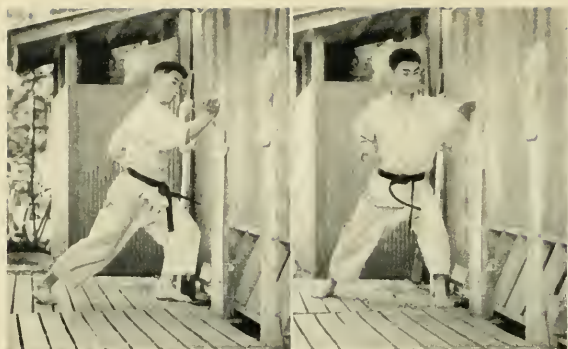
#### **A. Reverse punch**

This is one of the most basic techniques of karate and must be practiced constantly, both by beginners as well as experts. Unlike the striking techniques, which almost invariably depend on the use of a snapping motion, focusing the punch is not easy to learn merely by practicing it into the empty air. In preparing to punch the board, stand directly in front of it in a forward stance at such a distance that the fist extends about two inches beyond the board when the arm is fully extended. In punching, rotate the hips fully back, but without shifting balance, and extend opposite hand forward; then perform the reverse punch at the board. Take care to strike correctly with the four striking points of the fore-fist. There will be a tendency for the hand to glance off at first, but constant practice will correct this. In punching, if anything the hips should be lowered toward the target, rather than raised. About one hundred punches with each hand is reasonable for one practice session.



#### **B. Back-fist strike**

Stand in a straddle-leg stance at a 45° angle to the board. Execute a sideward strike to the board, fully utilizing the snap of the elbow. A variation which makes the blow more effective is to start from a forward stance and then to twist into a straddle-leg stance while striking.



### C. Knife-hand strike

Assume a forward stance to the side of the board. To execute either inside or outside strike, twist hips back and then forward. To avoid injury, be sure to hold fingers firmly together.

### D. Ridge-hand strike

Follow the same stance and procedure as above to execute outside strike.



### E. Elbow strike

Follow the same stance and procedure as in reverse punch, but closer to the board, to practice forward strike.

## ■ punching and kicking bag

There are two sizes of punching bags commonly used in karate, one  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet long by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick, and the other 1 foot long by 6 inches thick. Both consist of leather or rubber waste stuffed tightly into a canvas bag. They should be hung so that the bottom comes about even with the groin. The longer one is best hung by a rope or chain that will enable it to be conveniently raised and lowered. The smaller bag should be hung on a strong rubber band, such as a bicycle tube.

### purpose

1. The large bag is used mainly for practicing focusing and for strengthening the various kicks. It gives excellent training in perfecting the most effective angle of impact.

2. The smaller bag is also used for kicking practice. Since it is light and is hung on an elastic band, it will move when struck, giving good practice in timing and in kicking a moving target.

3. Both bags can also be used for practicing hand techniques, and particularly hand and foot techniques in combination.



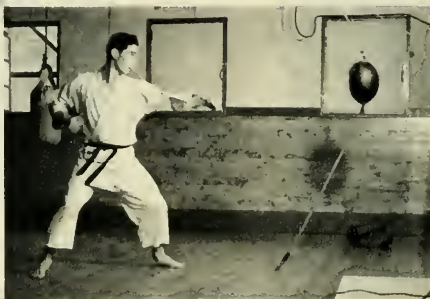
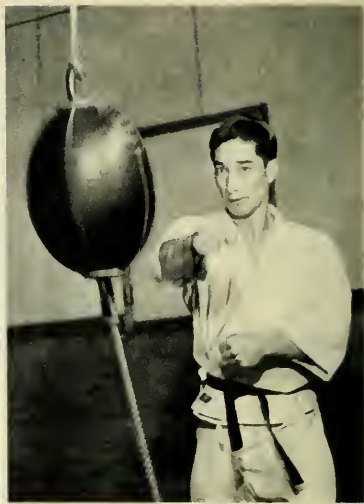


## ■ punching ball

This consists of a rubber ball about one foot in diameter placed inside a leather bag fastened to the ceiling and floor with strong rubber ropes. The center of the ball should be about shoulder height.

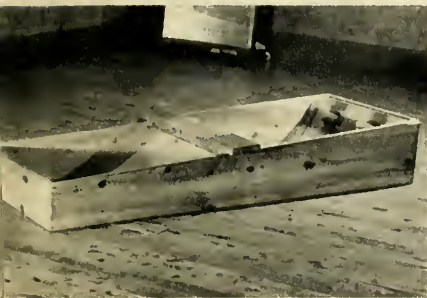
### purpose

The punching ball is used mainly for practice in timing of hand techniques. It is also useful for kicking practice.



## ■ body stretcher

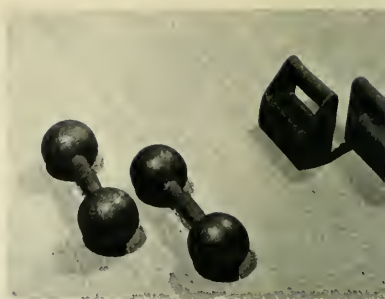
Pieces of equipment similar to this and with the same purpose are found in many other sports and will serve as well as the one shown here. The main purpose is to toughen the muscles of the stomach, abdomen, and sides. The stretcher shown here is constructed in such a way that the horizontal board can be adjusted to fit the length of the legs of the person using it.



(See explanation of use on page 42.)

## ■ dumbbells

For karate training, dumbbells weighing from three to five pounds are best. They are effective in strengthening the muscles used in extending and retracting the arms.



Be sure to keep the shoulders down and to tense the chest muscles adequately. If this is not done, focusing of hand techniques will be hindered rather than helped. Since the use of dumbbells sacrifices speed for strength, after using them it is a good idea to practice a bit without them.

### ■ iron geta (clogs)

This is a piece of equipment unique to karate. They weigh about five pounds each, their use doing for the legs what the dumbbells do for the arms. After using them, it is desirable to perform a few kicks without them.



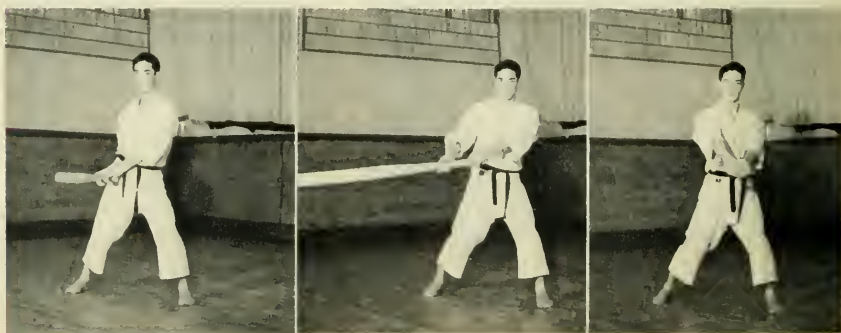
### ■ heavy club

This is either a heavy wooden club or an iron pipe weighing about ten pounds. It should be five to six feet long and have a handle fixed for easy holding. It gives good training in balance and focusing and provides general muscle-strengthening exercise



### how to use

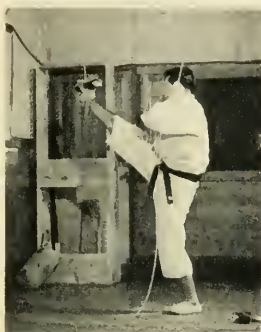
As shown here, swing club over your head and stop it smartly in front of your body; or swing it from the side and stop it smartly in front of your body.





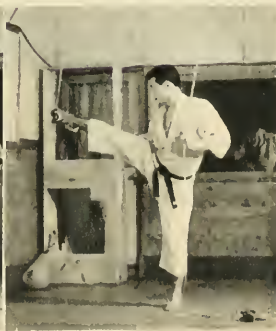
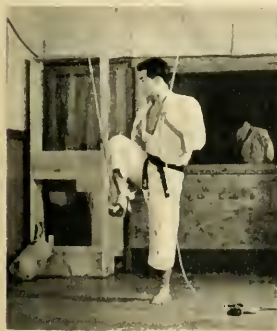
## ■ pulley

Attach two pulleys to the ceiling about five feet apart, and pass a thin, strong rope through them so that both ends reach the floor. Fix the ends so they can be conveniently attached to the feet. This is useful for limbering-up and stretching the leg muscles. It can also be used to help train the leg muscles to kick properly.



## how to use

Attach one foot to one end of the rope and pull the other end with both hands, stretching the leg up, either forward or sideward. Also, as shown below, pull the rope with one hand to practice correct kicking form.



## ■ mirror

A full-view mirror will be found extremely useful in observing and correcting your form while practicing the various techniques.



## glossary

<i>age-zuki</i>	rising punch	<i>koshi</i>	ball of the foot
<i>age-uke</i>	rising block	<i>kumade</i>	bear hand
<i>choku-zuki</i>	straight punch	<i>kumite</i>	sparring
<i>ch'uan fa</i>	"fist way"	<i>ma-ai</i>	distancing
<i>dōjō</i>	(training) gym	<i>mae-geri</i>	front kick
<i>empi</i>	elbow	<i>mae-geri-keage</i>	front snap kick
<i>empi-uchi</i>	elbow strike	<i>mae-geri-kekomi</i>	front thrust kick
<i>fumikomi</i>	stamping kick	<i>mae-tobi-geri</i>	flying front kick
<i>fumi-waza</i>	stamping (techniques)	<i>makawara</i>	punching board
<i>gedan-barai</i>	downward block	<i>mawashi-geri</i>	roundhouse kick
<i>gela</i>	clogs	<i>mawashi-zuki</i>	roundhouse punch
<i>gyaku-zuki</i>	reverse punch	<i>mikazuki-geri</i>	crescent kick
<i>hachiji-dachi</i>	open-leg stance	<i>mikazuki-geri-uke</i>	crescent-kick block
<i>horgetsu-dachi</i>	wide hour-glass stance	<i>mizu no kokoro</i>	"a mind like water"
<i>hoishu</i>	back hand	<i>morote-uke</i>	augmented forearm block
<i>haishu-uchi</i>	back-hand strike	<i>morote-zuki</i>	double-fist punch
<i>haishu-uke</i>	back-hand block	<i>nagashi-uke</i>	sweeping block
<i>haisoku</i>	instep	<i>nage-waza</i>	throwing (techniques)
<i>hoitō</i>	ridge hand	<i>nakadate-ippō-ken</i>	middle-finger one-knuckle fist
<i>haitō-uchi</i>	ridge-hand strike	<i>nami-ashi</i>	inside snapping block
<i>heisoku-dachi</i>	informal-attention stance	<i>neko-ashi-dachi</i>	cat stance
<i>hen-ō</i>	responding	<i>nihon-nukite</i>	two-finger spear hand
<i>hiroken</i>	fore-knuckle fist	<i>nukite</i>	spear-hand straight thrust
<i>hiraiken-zuki</i>	fore-knuckle-fist straight punch	<i>oi-zuki</i>	lunge punch
<i>hittsui</i>	knee	<i>Okinawa-te</i>	"Okinawa hands"
<i>hittsui-geri</i>	knee kick	<i>osae-uke</i>	pressing block
<i>ippō-ken</i>	one-knuckle fist	<i>riken</i>	back fist
<i>ippō-ken-zuki</i>	one-knuckle-fist straight punch	<i>riken-uchi</i>	back-fist strike
<i>ippō-nukite</i>	one-finger spear hand	<i>sanchin-dachi</i>	hour-glass stance
<i>jijū-ippō-kumite</i>	semi-free one-blow sparring	<i>seiken</i>	fore-fist
<i>jijū-kumite</i>	free-style sparring	<i>seiken-choku-zuki</i>	fore-fist straight punch
<i>jūji-uke</i>	x-block	<i>seriyuto</i>	ox-jaw hand
<i>kagi-zuki</i>	hook punch	<i>shutō</i>	knife hand
<i>kokoto</i>	heel	<i>shutō-uchi</i>	knife-hand strike
<i>kake-dameshi</i>	tests of strength	<i>shutō-uke</i>	knife-hand block
<i>kake-uke</i>	hooking block	<i>sōchin-dachi</i>	diagonal straddle-leg stance
<i>kake-waza</i>	hooking (techniques)	<i>sokuto</i>	foot edge
<i>kakiwake-uke</i>	wedge block	<i>suki</i>	opening
<i>kokutō</i>	bent wrist	<i>sukui-uke</i>	scooping block
<i>kokutō-uke</i>	bent-wrist block	<i>tate-zuki</i>	vertical-fist punch
<i>kata</i>	"forms"	<i>teishō</i>	palm heel
<i>keitō</i>	chicken-head wrist	<i>teishō-uchi</i>	palm-heel strike
<i>keitō-uke</i>	chicken-head-wrist block	<i>teishō-uke</i>	palm-heel block
<i>kempū</i>	"fist way"	<i>teishō-zuki</i>	palm-heel straight punch
<i>kendō</i>	sword fighting	<i>teisoku</i>	sole
<i>keri-waza</i>	kicking (techniques)	<i>tettsui</i>	bottom fist
<i>kiho-dachi</i>	straddle-leg stance	<i>tettsui-uchi</i>	bottom-fist strike
<i>kihon kumite</i>	basic sparring	<i>tettsui-uke</i>	bottom-fist block
<i>kime</i>	focus	<i>tsukami-uke</i>	grasping block
<i>kokō</i>	tiger-mouth hand	<i>tsuki no kokoro</i>	"a mind like the moon"
<i>kokutsu-dachi</i>	back stance	<i>tsuki-uke</i>	punching block

<i>tsuki-waza</i>	punching (techniques)
<i>uchi-waza</i>	striking (techniques)
<i>ude</i>	forearm
<i>ude-uke</i>	forearm block
<i>ura-zuki</i>	close punch
<i>ushiro-geri</i>	back kick
<i>ushiro-geri-keage</i>	back snap kick
<i>ushiro-geri-kekomi</i>	back thrust kick

<i>yama-zuki</i>	u-punch
<i>yoko-geri</i>	side kick
<i>yoko-geri-keage</i>	side snap kick
<i>yoko-geri-kekomi</i>	side thrust kick
<i>yoko-tobi-geri</i>	flying side kick
<i>yonhon-nukite</i>	spear hand
<i>zenkutsu-dachi</i>	forward stance

# index

*Where more than one page reference is listed for a given technique or grouping, the main entry is given first, followed by a semicolon and then the subsidiary entries.*

- actively creating an opening, 185
- attacking techniques; by foot, 119-36; by hand, 69-98
- augmented forearm block, 107; 156, 164, 165, 173; special use of, 164
- back fist, 48
- back-fist strike, 86-87; 144, 157, 158, 160, 161, 178, 200, 237
- back hand, 48
- back-hand block, 115; 154, 155
- back-hand strike, 89
- back kick, 127-28
- back snap kick, 127-28; 199, 202
- back stance, 57
- back thrust kick, 127-28; 200, 201, 208, 219, 221
- balance in combination techniques, 142-43
- ball of the foot, 51
- basic sparring, 169-80; 29; representative examples of, 171-80; standard procedure in, 170
- bear hand, 49
- bear-hug, 199
- bent wrist, 50
- bent-wrist block, 115
- blocking techniques; by foot, 137-39; by hand, 99-117
- body dynamics in combination techniques, 145
- body shifting, 62-67
- body stretcher, 241
- bottom fist, 48
- bottom-fist block, 116
- bottom-fist strike, 88
- bow, principle of, 56
- boxing, 183
- breath control, 20, 21, 237
- calisthenics, 38-44
- cat stance, 58
- character-building aspects of karate, 15
- chair-sitting position, defense from, 210-15
- chicken-head wrist, 50
- chicken-head-wrist block, 115
- choking attack, defense against, 209
- ch'uan fa*, 16
- close punch, 81; 156, 173, 198
- club attack, defense against, 222-29
- combination techniques, 140-49; examples of, 149
- competitive karate, 29, 187-89
- concentration of strength, 19, 70
- contest rules, 187-89
- crescent kick, 131
- crescent-kick block, 139; 143, 202
- Daruma Taishi, 16
- defense; from chair-sitting position, 210-15; against club attack, 222-29; from floor-sitting position, 204-9; against holding, 196-202; against knife attack, 216-21; against pistol threat, 230-33
- diagonal straddle-leg stance, 58
- distancing, 169; 181, 183, 220
- double-fist close punch, 82
- double-fist punch, 82
- double-stepping, 64
- downward block, 106; 148, 173, 175, 176, 177, 180, 197, 233
- dumbbells, 242
- elbow, 50
- elbow strike, 96-98; 144, 157, 172, 173, 191, 192, 198, 199, 201, 207, 209, 213, 224, 233, 238
- "empty-punching," 71
- equipment, 235-46
- essential principles of karate, 18-21
- exercises, *see* calisthenics, formal exercises
- extended knife-hand block, 175; 176, 217, 223, 227
- feinting, 184, 185, 186
- floor-sitting position, defense from, 204-9
- flying front kick, 134; 25
- flying side kick, 135
- focus, 21; 70, 183, 237
- focused block, 99
- focusing on opponent's eyes, 170
- foot attacking techniques, 119-36
- foot blocking techniques, 137-39
- foot edge, 51
- foot techniques, 118-39; organization of, 25
- forearm, 50
- forearm block, 102-3
- fore-fist, 47
- fore-fist straight punch, 70-77
- fore-knuckle fist, 48
- fore-knuckle-fist punch, 76; 199, 209
- formal exercise, 150-67; 29
- formal exercises; advantages of, 151; hints on mastering, 151; schematic diagram of, 151



forward stance, 57  
free-style sparring, 183-89; 29, 168, 169; as a sport 187-89  
front-facing posture, 61  
front kick, 120-22; 142, 147, 148, 171, 174, 176, 177, 178, 180, 193, 197, 198, 202, 226, 228, 229, 231  
front knee kick, 136  
front snap kick, 121-22; 25, 160, 162, 163, 211  
front thrust kick, 121-22; 25, 212  
full nelson, defense against, 199  
Funakoshi Gichin, 16-17, 168

*geta* clogs, iron, 243  
grasping block, 116

half-front-facing posture, 61  
hand attacking techniques, 69-98  
hand blocking techniques, 99-117  
hand techniques, 68-117; organization of, 23-24  
Hashi, King, 16  
heavy club, 244  
heel, 51  
Heian No. 4, 152-67  
history of karate, 16-17  
holding, defense against, 196-202  
hook punch, 84  
hooking block, 116; 198  
hour-glass stance, 59

I-chin sutra, 16  
informal-attention stance, 55  
injury, danger of, 183  
inside forearm block, 102-3; 180, 198, 215  
inside snapping block, 138; 220  
instep, 51

Japan, introduction of karate to, 17  
Japan Karate Association, 15, 17, 187  
judo, 190  
*jūjitsu*, 17

karate; as a physical art, 14; as self-defense, 195-233; 13; as a sport, 187-89; 14  
*kempō*, 16  
kicking techniques, 118-39; 25  
"killing" blow, 188, 189  
knee, 51  
knee kick, 136; 25, 173, 205  
knife attack, defense against, 216-21  
knife hand, 49

knife-hand block, 104-5; 24, 146, 159, 167, 174, 176, 219, 232, 233  
knife-hand strike, 90-91; 24, 159, 160, 167, 177, 224, 232, 238

limbering-up exercises, 40-41  
lunge punch, 74-75; 148, 162, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 185

martial arts, 169  
maximum strength, 19  
middle-finger one-knuckle fist, 48  
"mind like the moon," 20-21  
"mind like water," 20  
mirror, 246  
miscellaneous blocks, 114-17  
"morality" of Japanese martial arts, 169  
muscular control in combination techniques, 144  
muscular expansion and contraction, 19  
muscle-strengthening exercises, 42-43

*Okinawa-e*, 16  
one-finger spear hand, 49  
one-finger spear-hand straight thrust, 77  
one-knuckle fist, 48  
one-knuckle-fist straight punch, 76  
on-guard position in free-style sparring, 183  
openings, 184-86  
open-leg stance, 55  
outside forearm block, 102-3; 144, 171, 172, 198, 213  
ox-jaw hand, 50

palm heel, 50  
palm-heel block, 114  
palm-heel straight punch, 76  
palm-heel strike, 94-95; 191, 192, 218  
passively creating an opening, 186  
physical art, karate as, 14  
physical principles, 19-20  
pistol threat, defense against, 230-33  
posture, 60-61; organization of, 27  
practice schedule, outline example of, 29  
practice uniform, 37  
present-day karate, three aspects of, 13, 17  
pressing block, 117  
psychological principles, 20-21  
pulley, 245  
punching, distinction between striking, 69, 85  
punching ball, 240  
punching block, 114; 24

punching board, 236-38  
 punching and kicking bag, 239  
 punching techniques, 69-84

reaction-force, 19-20  
 reaction-time exercises, 44  
 ready position, 69, 104, 106, 107; in semi-free one-blow sparring, 182  
 reflex action, 21  
 responding, 21; 169, 183  
 resultant force, 19  
 reverse punch, 72-73; 142, 145, 146, 148, 162, 163, 171, 175, 177, 180, 219, 223, 226, 227, 231, 232, 237  
 ridge hand, 48  
 ridge-hand strike, 92-93; 178, 238  
 rising block, 100-1; 145, 146, 171, 173, 191, 192, 206  
 rising knife-hand block, 177; 224  
 rising punch, 79  
 roundhouse kick, 129-30; 25, 142, 145, 171, 176, 179, 180, 185, 186, 206, 207, 214, 215, 217, 225, 227, 233  
 roundhouse knee kick, 136  
 roundhouse punch, 80; 24, 199  
 Ryukyu Island chain, 16

scooping block, 117, 193  
 self-defense, karate as, 195-233; 13  
 semi-free sparring, 181-82; 29-30, 169  
 Shaolin-szu, 16  
 shifting, *see* body shifting  
 shifting body weight in combination techniques, 148  
 side-facing posture, 61  
 side kick, 123-26; 147, 175, 176, 186  
 side snap kick, 124-26; 123, 157, 158, 202, 217, 220, 232  
 side thrust kick, 124-26; 123, 143, 145, 179, 180, 185, 192, 202, 208, 216, 207, 208, 211, 214, 217, 221, 223  
 slide-stepping, 66; *see also* stepping, step-turning  
 sliding, 65  
 sliding block, 225, 227  
 sole, 51  
 sparring, 168-89; 29  
 spear hand, 49  
 spear-hand straight thrust, 77; 146, 148, 167  
 sport, karate as, 14, 187-89

sportsmanship, 15  
 stamping kick, 132-33; 179, 192, 199  
 stamping techniques, 132-33; 25  
 stance, 54-59; organization of, 26  
 stepping, 63; *see also* slide-stepping, step-turning  
 step-turning, 67; *see also* slide-stepping, stepping  
 straddle-leg stance, 56  
 straight punch, 24, 145, 163  
 striking, definition of, 85  
 striking points, 46-53  
 striking power, 19  
 striking techniques, 85-98  
 supporting leg; in front kick, 122; in side kick, 125  
 surprise attack, use of flying kick as, 134, 135  
 sweeping block, 117  
 switch-over in combination techniques, 146

tactics, 184-86; 183  
 techniques, overall organization of, 23  
 tests of strength, 168  
 throwing techniques, 190-93  
 tiger-mouth hand, 49  
 timing, 169, 183, 220  
 training gym, 36  
 training methods, 29-37; *see also* calisthenics, equipment  
 training schedules, examples of, 30-34  
 training sequence, a recommended, 34-35  
 turning, 67  
 two-finger spear hand, 49  
 two-finger spear-hand straight thrust, 77

unity of mind and will, 21  
 u-punch, 83

vertical-fist punch, 78  
 vital points, 52-53; 189

wedge block, 112-13; 161, 163, 198  
 wide hour-glass stance, 59  
 wind exercises, 44  
 withdrawing hand, example of use of, 101

x-block, 108-11; 155, 171, 211

